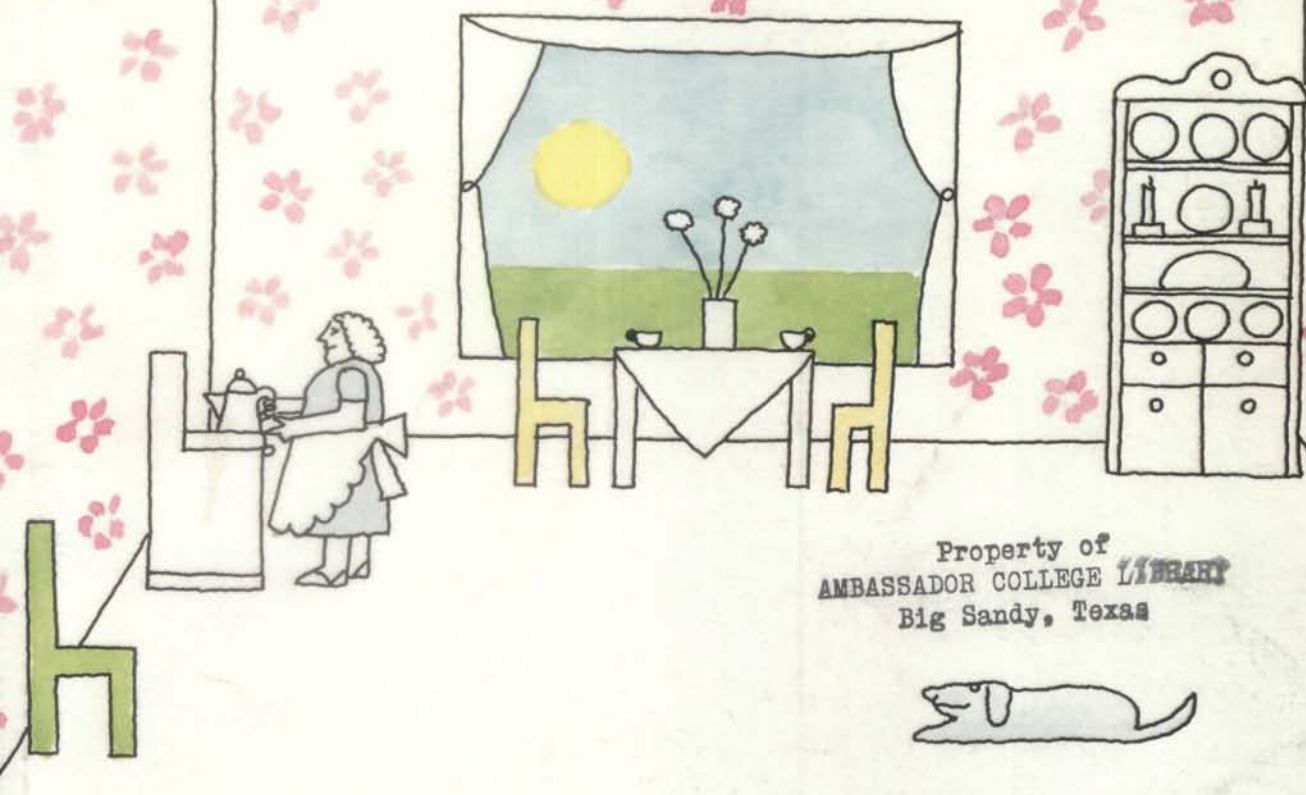


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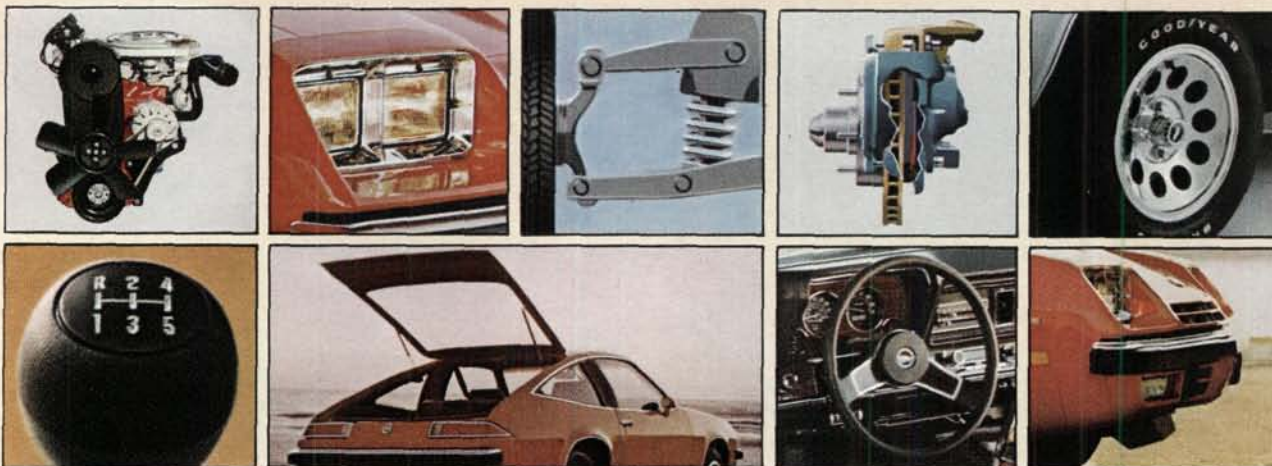
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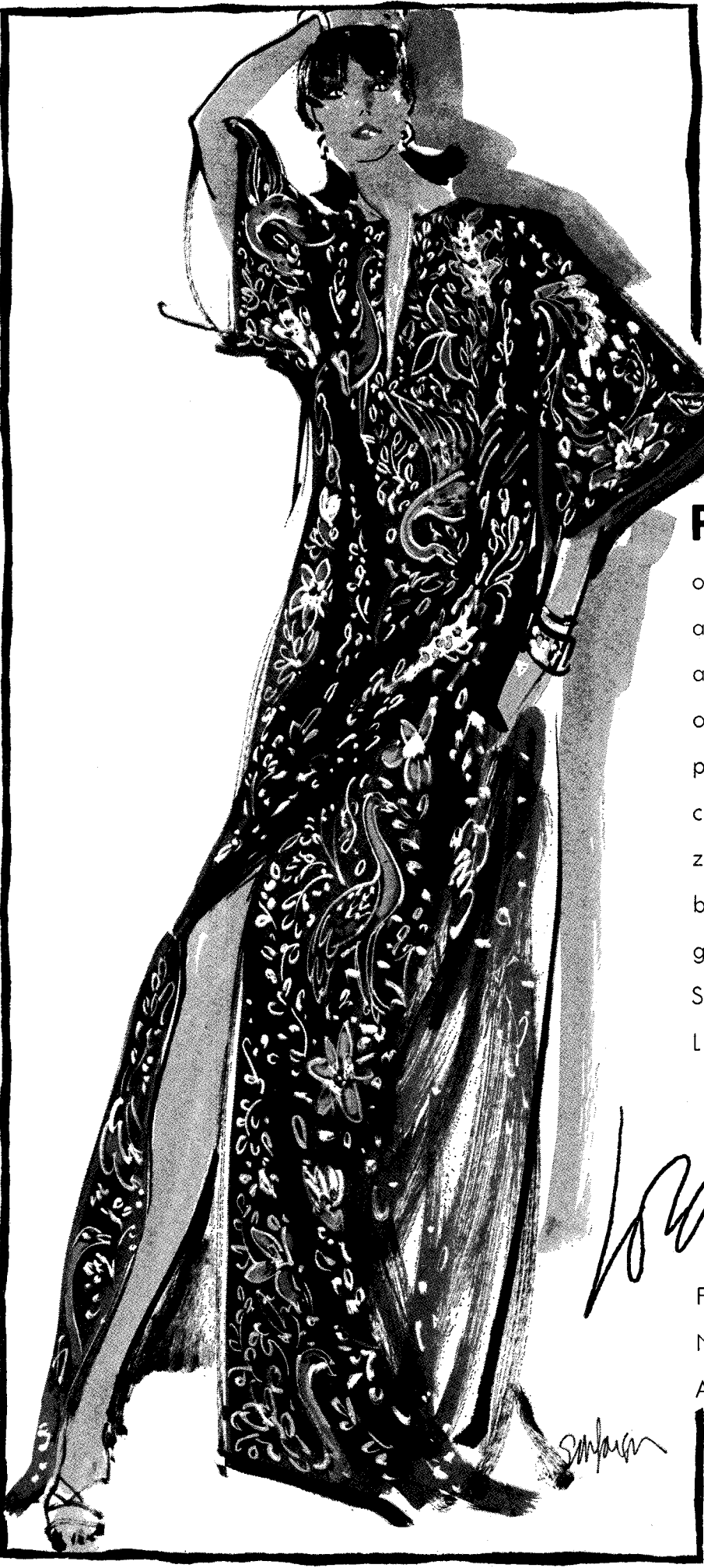
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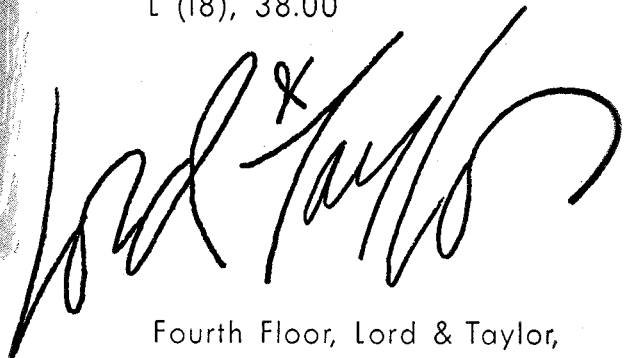
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

BARGAININ' THING—A melodrama by Dan Owens, directed by Harold Scott. (Henry Street Settlement's New Federal Theatre, 240 E. 3rd St. Thursdays through Sunday at 7:30. Closes Sunday, April 25. Free.)

THE BELLE OF AMHERST—Julie Harris in a one-woman show about the life of Emily Dickinson. Written by William Luce; Charles Nelson Reilly directed. Preview Tuesday, April 27. Opens officially on Wednesday, April 28, and will run through Sunday, May 23. (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 246-5639. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 7. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

BOY MEETS BOY—As described. This musical, with the indicated twist, is a foolish takeoff on foolish musicals of the thirties. Bill Solly wrote the agreeable songs, and Donald Ward and Mr. Solly did the book. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 242-9657. Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7:30 and 10:30; and Sundays at 8. Matinees Sundays at 3.)

BUBBLING BROWN SUGAR—Down Memory Lane in Harlem, which means the twenties, the Cotton Club, the Savoy, Ellington, Waller... A lane? A boulevard. (ANTA Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-6270. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinees Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

THE CHERRY ORCHARD—Kim Hunter in a revival of the Chekhov play. (Roundabout Stage One, 333 W. 23rd St. 924-7160. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2. Closes Sunday, May 23.)

EDEN—The setting of Steve Carter's play is somewhere in the West Sixties, back in the nineteen-twenties. The leading character is a stern West Indian paterfamilias, who is a follower of Marcus Garvey and his Back to Africa movement, and most of the action concerns a kind of guerrilla warfare he conducts with a young American Negro and his aunt, in the apartment next door. Needless to say, his daughter falls in love with the American and he with her. The play is funny, sad, convincing, and thoroughly honorable. The cast headed by Graham Brown is very good, indeed. Edmund Cambridge directed. (St. Marks Playhouse, 133 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. OR 4-3530. Wednesday through Friday at 8; Saturday at 8:30; and Sunday at 7. Matinees Saturday at 3:30 and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, May 2.)

THE HEIRESS—A revival of the dramatization by Ruth and Augustus Goetz of Henry James's "Washington Square," with Jane Alexander, Richard Kiley, Jan Miner, and David Selby. Directed by George Keathley. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 246-6699. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

KNOCK KNOCK—Jules Feiffer's jokey comedy about a pair of bickering old hermits who are intruded upon by a succession of visitors, most notably Joan of Arc. The verbal games and puns grow tiresome after a while, but the sight gags are entertaining, and so are the performances. Neil Flanagan and Daniel Seltzer are the old men, Nancy Snyder is Joan, and Leonard Frey is everybody else. (Biltmore, 261 W. 47th St. 582-5340. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THE LADY FROM THE SEA—Vanessa Redgrave is well worth mooning over in this late play by Ibsen. (Circle in the Square, Broadway at 50th St. 581-0720. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

ME AND BESSIE—A vigorous, if eventually disappointing, attempt by the gospel-and-blues singer Linda Hopkins to re-create Bessie

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Smith by singing a batch of her songs (in the alternating voices of Bessie, Dinah Washington, and Mahalia Jackson), dressing up in cloche hats and feather boas that wear *her*, and giving an esoteric biographical patter. But there are moments, particularly in such numbers as "Taint Nobody's Bizness If I Do" and "Kitchen Man," when Hopkins' singing and acting synchronize and the great Bessie materializes. The music is played by a capable small group led by Howlett Smith. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays at 2, Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 2:30 and 5:30.)

MEDAL OF HONOR RAG—The entire action of Tom Cole's play is a psychiatric session at an Army hospital, the patient being a black soldier—a Vietnam veteran who has won the Congressional Medal of Honor for an episode he considers shameful. The situation is in itself absorbing, and there is no melodramatic fakery. The performances by Howard E. Rollins, Jr., as the soldier, and David Clennon, as his doctor, are excellent. David

Chambers directed. (Theatre de Lys, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinees Sundays at 3.)

MONTY PYTHON LIVE!—The British TV comics rush through their assorted acts of silliness as if the world were coming to an end, and not with a bang but a giggle. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8089. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinees Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, May 2.)

MY FAIR LADY—A flawless revival of a flawless musical. How did the world get along without it for fifteen thousand years? (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 695-5858. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

THE NORMAN CONQUESTS—Three plays, each complete in itself and presented at succeeding performances, make up one great big play. The hero is a lascivious young man who pursues every woman he encounters, including, from time to time, his wife. The author is Alan Ayckbourn, and a very funny fellow he is. The schedule is complicated—**LIVING TOGETHER**: Wednesday, April 21, at 2; Friday, April 23, as well as Monday, April 26, and Wednesday, April 28, at 8; and Saturday, May 1, at 2... **ROUND AND ROUND THE GARDEN**: Wednesday, April 21, at 8; Saturday, April 24, at 2; and Tuesday, April 27, as well as Thursday, April 29, and Saturday, May 1, at

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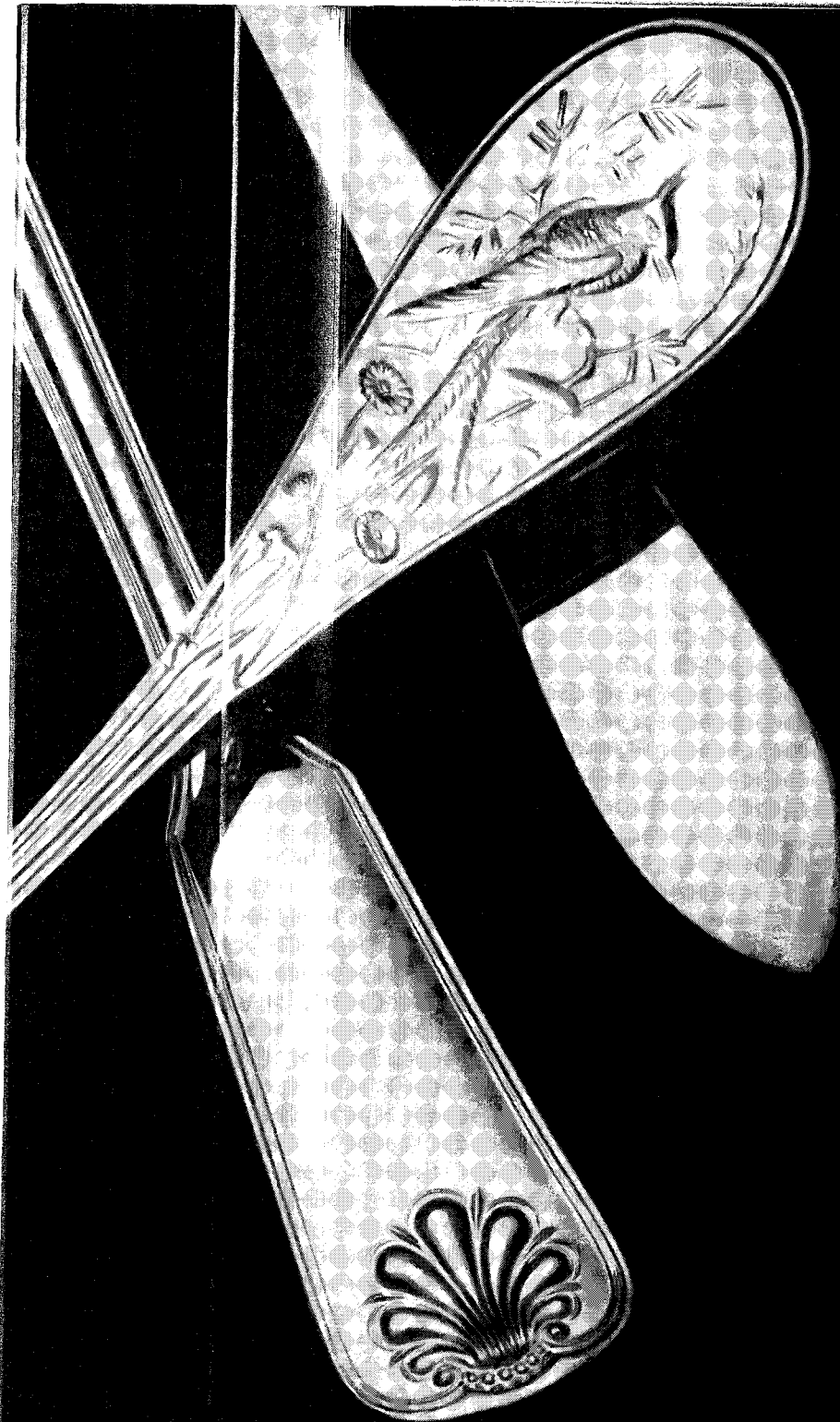
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

8. . . **TABLE MANNERS**: Thursday, April 22, and Saturday, April 24, at 8; Wednesday, April 28, at 2; and Friday, April 30, at 8. (Morosco, 215 W. 45th St. 246-6230.)

THE OLD GLORY—A trilogy of plays ("Endecott and the Red Cross," "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," and "Benito Cereno") by Robert Lowell that are being performed as a single, double, or triple bill. **ENDECOTT AND THE RED CROSS** and **MY KINSMAN, MAJOR MOLINEUX**: Wednesday, April 21, at 1:30 and 8; Thursday, April 22, at 1:30; Sunday, April 25, as well as Tuesday through Thursday, April 27-29, at 8; and Saturday, May 1, at 1:30. . . . **BENITO CERENO**: Thursday, April 22, at 8, and Saturday, April 24, as well as Wednesday and Thursday, April 28-29, at 1:30. . . . **TRIL-O-GY**: Friday and Saturday, April 23-24, at 6; Sunday, April 25, at 1:30; and Friday and Saturday, April 30-May 1, at 6. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Closes Sunday, May 23.)

PACIFIC OVERTURES—A Harold Prince-Stephen Sondheim musical, with lovely sets by Boris Aronson. An attempt to tell an unpleasant story—the exploitation of Japan by Western powers in the nineteenth century—from the Japanese point of view. With an all-Asian cast. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 245-4878. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

PHOENIX THEATRE—The final two plays in this season's repertory. **Bella** and **Samuel Spewack's BOY MEETS GIRL**, directed by John Lithgow: Wednesday, April 21, at 2 and 8; Saturday, April 24, at 8; Sunday, April 25, at 3; Tuesday, April 27, at 8; Wednesday, April 28, at 2; and Saturday, May 1, at 8. . . . **William Gillette's SECRET SERVICE**, directed by Daniel Freudenberger: Thursday and Friday, April 22-23, at 8; Saturday, April 24, at 2; Wednesday through Friday, April 28-30, at 8; Saturday, May 1, at 2. (Playhouse, 357 W. 48th St. 541-9820. May close Sunday, May 2.)

THE PRIMARY ENGLISH CLASS—Israel Horowitz's one-act comedy of misunderstanding that goes on a bit too long but is full of merriment all the same. With Jill Eikenberry. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7:30 and 10:15; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinees Sundays at 3.)

REX—A musical with a score by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, a book by Sherman Yellen, and a cast headed by Nicol Williamson, Penny Fuller, and Tom Aldredge. Edwin Sherin directed. Previews through Saturday, April 24. Opens officially on Sunday, April 25. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 586-5555. Nightly at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

RICH AND FAMOUS—John Guare's imaginative and very funny fantasy about—of all things—a failed playwright. William Atherton is excellent as the hero, and he is well attended by Anita Gillette and Ron Leibman as all the other characters. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Nightly at 7:30. Matinees Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, April 25.)

THE ROYAL FAMILY—A revival of the Kaufman-Ferber comedy about the Barrymores. Under Ellis Rabb's magic touch, it is still very fresh and funny. The stars of the wonderful company are Eva Le Gallienne, Rosemary Harris, Sam Levene, and Mr. Rabb himself, and they are supported by such fine actors as Rosetta LeNoire and Joseph Maher, among others. The beautiful setting, costumes, and lighting are by Oliver Smith, Ann Roth, and John Gleason, respectively. (Helen Hayes, 210 W. 46th St. 246-6380. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY—Opening performances of a three-week engagement that will end Sunday, May 9. **Alan Howard in HENRY V**: Wednesday, April 21, at 8 (preview); Thursday, April 22, at 6:30 (opening); Friday, April 23, at 2 and 8; Saturday, April 24, at 8; Sunday, April 25, at 2 and 7:30; and Tuesday through Saturday, April 27-May 1, at 8. . . . **THE HOLLOW CROWN**, an anthology of music, poetry, speeches, letters, and other writings by and about the kings and queens of England: Saturday, May 1, at 2. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100.)



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SEASON-WITHIN-A-SEASON—Final performances in a series of plays by black playwrights, presented by the Negro Ensemble Company. Through Sunday, April 25: **A FICTIONAL ACCOUNT OF THE LIVES OF RICHARD AND SARAH ALLEN**, by Sylvia-Elaine Foard. . . . Tuesday through Sunday, April 27-May 2: **SUNSHINE, MOONBEAM**, by Alberta Hill, and **KINGDOM**, by Ali Wadud. (St. Marks Playhouse, 133 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. OR 4-3530. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinees Saturdays at 3:30 and Sundays at 2:30.)

SO LONG, 174TH STREET—Robert Morse in a musical with a book by Joseph Stein (based on his comedy "Enter Laughing" and Carl Reiner's book of the same name) and music and lyrics by Stan Daniels. Directed by Burt Shevelove. Previews through Monday, April 26. Opens officially on Tuesday, April 27. (Harkness, Broadway at 63rd St. 581-6000. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:45. Matinees Wednesdays, except April 21, and Saturdays at 2.)

STREAMERS—A play by David Rabe, directed by Mike Nichols. Opens Wednesday, April 21. (Newhouse, 150 W. 65th St. 362-7616. Nightly, except Mondays, at 7:30. Matinees Saturdays and Sundays at 2.)

THE THREEPENNY OPERA—A revival of the Kurt Weill-Bertolt Brecht musical, in a new translation by Ralph Manheim and John Willett, with Ellen Greene and Raul Julia. The final presentation of the season by the New York Shakespeare Festival at Lincoln Center. Previews through Friday, April 30. Opens officially on Saturday, May 1, and will run through Sunday, June 6. (Vivian Beaumont, 150 W. 65th St. 362-7616. Tuesdays through Sundays at 8. Matinees Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30.)

TUSCALOOSA'S CALLING ME . . . BUT I'M NOT GOING!—This little revue—tuneful, witty, and refreshing—is a delightful celebration of New York City in its hours of travail. Hank Beebe wrote the score, Bill Heyer wrote the lyrics, and Mr. Heyer, Mr. Beebe, and Sam Dann wrote the sketches. Ted Pritchard, Patti Perkins, and Chip Zien are the entire and entirely satisfactory cast. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7:30 and 10. Matinees Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3 and 5:30.)

VANITIES—In three acts, three Southern high-school girl cheerleaders change from all but identical "best friends" (1963) into quite different and incompatible New Yorkers (1974), in this amusing and gently ironic comedy by Jack Heifner. Garland Wright directed the attractive performance. (Downstairs at the Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinees Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

VERY GOOD EDDIE—A revival of a musical first seen on Broadway in 1915. The music, by Jerome Kern, is worth hearing, and a couple of the songs have lyrics by the godlike Wodehouse. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 246-5969. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?—In the Groves of Academe dwell many dragons. Colleen Dewhurst and Ben Gazzara are the leading dragons in this production of the harsh and very funny Albee play, directed by the author. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St.

246-4636. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

WOMEN BEHIND BARS—A revival of the Tom Eyen comedy. (Truck and Warehouse Theatre, 79 E. 4th St. 777-0140. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays and Saturdays at 8 and 10:30; and Sundays at 8.)

WOYZECK—Joseph Chaikin gives a strong, eloquent performance in a poor production of Georg Büchner's early-nineteenth-century play. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 677-6350. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, April 25.)

YENTL—A play about Jews in the Old Country long ago, based on a story by Isaac Bashevis Singer. Tovah Feldshuh plays the part of a bright and pretty girl masquerading successfully as a husband—but no way! (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0218. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

LONG RUNS—CHICAGO: A musical that has nothing to do with its name and that intermittently comes to life, thanks to Gwen Verdon, Chita Rivera, and Jerry Orbach. Bob Fosse directed and choreographed. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-4271. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE**: A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. A brilliant, innovative musical, conceived, choreographed, and directed by Michael Bennett. Score by Marvin Hamlisch, lyrics by Edward Kleban, book by James Kirkwood and Nicholas Dante. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 246-5990. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

. . . **EQUUS**: Peter Shaffer's continuously exciting melodrama about a boy who mutilates six horses in the very act of worshipping them. With Richard Burton and Keith McDermott, directed by John Dexter. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 246-9156. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS**: 6,657 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinees Sundays at 3.) . . . **GODSPELL**: A musical adaptation of the Book of Matthew, and once a numbing prologue is over, it becomes a joyful celebration of theatre itself. Songs by Stephen Schwartz. (Promenade, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. 799-7690. Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 7:30, and Saturdays at 6 and 9. Matinees Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **GREASE**: A musical (score, book, and lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey) that parodies, by faithful imitation, the songs and dances of the nineteen-fifties. The young cast performs capably and with spirit. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 245-5760. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE MAGIC SHOW**: A wretched musical, but the magic tricks make up for it all. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 489-6392. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **PIPPIN**: A big but skimpy musical that the director and choreographer Bob Fosse has turned into his very own "War and Peace," with everything but a yacht race. Eric Berry and Michael Rupert play Charlemagne and his son. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 265-2412. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **SAME TIME, NEXT YEAR**: A new playwright named Bernard Slade has invented an Erector set of one-liners that should last a lifetime. With Loretta Swit and Ted Bessell, directed by Gene Saks. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 245-3430. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **SHENANDOAH**: Even thirty years ago, this would have been an old-fashioned musical. The star is John Cullum, who sings his dull songs beautifully. (Alvin, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE WIZ**: An all-black production of a musical version of "The Wizard of Oz" with gorgeous scenery and costumes, tiresome music, and several first-rate performances. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 246-0730. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinees



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

THE CIRCUS—Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey's salute to two hundred years of circus in America. (Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Wednesday and Thursday, April 21-22, at 10:30 and 2:30; Friday, April 23, at 10:30, 2:30, and 7:30; Saturdays at 10:30, 3, and 8; Sundays at 1:15 and 5:30; Tuesday, April 27, at 10 and 2:30; and Wednesday through Friday, April 28-30, at 1:30 and 7:30. Closes Monday, May 31.)

MUMMENSCHANZ—A Swiss mime-and-mask troupe of three. (Alice Tully Hall, 362-1911. Saturday, May 1, at 3 and 8, and Sunday, May 2, at 3.)

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Opening performances (tentative schedule) of an engagement that will run through Sunday, June 27—Tuesday evening, April 27: "Bugaku," "La Sonnambula," and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet."... Wednesday evening, April 28: Divertimento from "Le Baiser de la Fée," "La Sonnambula," and "Cortège Hongrois."... Thursday evening, April 29: "Bugaku," "Dybbuk Variations," and "Cortège Hongrois."... Friday evening, April 30: "Jewels."... Saturday matinee, May 1: "Swan Lake," "Firebird," "Afternoon of a Faun," and "Western Symphony."... Saturday evening, May 1: "Ma Mère l'Oye," "Ivesiana," "Pas de Deux," and "Cortège Hongrois." (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. TR 7-4727. Evenings at 8. Matinees at 2.)

ROYAL BALLET—Wednesday, April 21, at 2 and 8; Friday, April 23, at 8; and Saturday, May 1, at 2 and 8: "Romeo and Juliet."... Thursday, April 22, at 8; Saturday, April 24, at 2 and 8; and Monday, April 26, at 8: "Swan Lake."... Tuesday, April 27, at 8, and Wednesday, April 28, at 2 and 8: "La Bayadère" and two American premières—"A Month in the Country" and "Rituals."... Thursday and Friday, April 29-30, at 8: "La Bayadère" and "La Fille Mal Gardée." (Metropolitan Opera House. 787-3880. Through Saturday, May 15.)

LAR LUBOVITCH DANCE COMPANY—"Session," "Girl on Fire," "Avalanche," "Whirligogs," and "One Good Turn" (première). (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Friday, April 23, at 7:30; Saturday, April 24, at 8; and Sunday, April 25, at 2.)

LAURA DEAN DANCE COMPANY—Performing "Song," a new work in which the dancers also sing. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Thursday, April 29, at 7:30; Friday and Saturday, April 30-May 1, at 8; and Sunday, May 2, at 2.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town.)

BAR NONE, 167 E. 33rd St. (684-3223)—A new place and a welcome one—sort of thirties chophouse. The pianist **DARDANELLE** is at work from seven until midnight, Tuesdays through Saturdays. Her playing is genteel Tatum, but her singing is pure, effortless, and delightful.

BOOMER'S, 340 Bleecker St., at Christopher St. (243-0245)—Simple, pleasant surroundings, collar greens and ribs on the menu, and, on the bandstand, Wednesdays through Saturdays, guitarist **JOE BECK'S** capable and occasionally stirring jazz-rock-R. & B. band. Music from nine-forty-five to three. Closed Sundays.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—On Wednesday, April 21, British rock-and-rollers Gallagher and Lyle alternate with Robert Palmer's progressive band. Thursday through Saturday, April 22-24, violinist **JEAN-LUC PONTY** will bring in his electronic fusion ensemble. Indian classicist **RAVI SHANKAR** will be in concert here on Sunday, April 25. Monday through Wednesday, April 26-28, second-generation Chicago-blues classicists **BUDDY GUY** and **JUNIOR WELLS** will co-pilot their band. And beginning Thursday, April 29, **CHARLES MINGUS** will offer a series of in-

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spired sessions. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty; Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Dinner.

BADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar with an abundance of dark pine panelling, good musicians—mostly pianists and their bassists—and patrons who like to talk. **JOHN BUNCH** and **GEORGE MRAZ** are here through Saturday, April 24. On Monday, April 26, **BOBBY DOROUGH** and **BILL TAKAS** will begin a six-night stint. The Sunday man is **BARRY HARRIS**, whose piano style is subtle and low-volume, with a highly developed melodic sense. Music from ten most nights; from nine-thirty on Sundays. Dinner.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (RH 4-1600)—**BOBBY SHORT** and his loyal accomplices, bassist Beverly Peer and drummer Gene Gammage, perform in the Café Carlyle Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-forty-five and eleven-forty-five and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-forty-five, eleven-fifteen, and one... Keyboard sorceress **MARIAN MC PARTLAND** is at the piano in the Bemelmans Bar from nine-thirty most weeknights. **BARBARA CARROLL** fills in for Mrs. McPartland Thursday through Wednesday, April 22-28.

CHURCHILL'S, 1277 Third Ave., at 73rd St. (650-1618)—**DUKE JORDAN**, not always visible in recent years, has turned up at the piano here for an indeterminate stay. When he is in top condition, he is a fleet and immaculate player. Tuesdays through Saturdays from eleven until four. Dining.

COOKERY, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (OR 4-4450)—**GRETCHEN CRYER** and **NANCY FORD**, who are, along with Dory Previn, Malvina Reynolds, and others, minstrels for the women's movement, share the facilities with pianist Marty Napoleon and bassist Bucky Calabrese weeknights. On Sundays, **DICK HYMAN**, an eclectic who goes all the way back, presides over the keyboard. Music from eight to one. Dining.

EDDIE CONDON'S, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—The third version, and an attractive one. The house band, which begins after nine, is a traditional (what else?) sextet, usually headed by Red Balaban (a bassist and the owner of the club). On Tuesday, April 27, Jo Jones, brushes in hand, will sit in with the regulars. Red Richards mans the piano, starting most nights at eight-thirty, and alternates with the sextet from nine-thirty. On Sunday, April 25, the **J.P.J. QUARTET**—tenor saxophonist Budd Johnson, bassist Bill Pemberton, drummer Oliver Jackson, and their current keyboard player—will perform buoyant swing numbers, beginning at eight. Dinner.

GREORY'S, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—A breath of life on the upper East Side. From the outside, this tiny bar appears to be a quiet place, especially in comparison with its singles-bar neighbors, but first-rate jazzmen and quite a few of their admirers are crowded together inside. Wednesday through Saturday, April 21-24, and Monday and Tuesday, April 26-27, **AL HAIG**, one of the first and best bop pianists, is in charge of a trio. Wednesday through Saturday, April 28-May 1, vibraharpist Warren Chiasson, guitarist Attila Zoller, and bassist Wilbur Little will get together. Music from nine-thirty to three. Mondays through Saturdays trumpet Gene Roland, guitarist Wayne Wright, and bassist Morris Edwards collaborate from six to nine. On Sunday, April 25, Warren Chiasson and Wilbur Little get together with guitarist Jimmy Ponder from five to two.

HOPPER'S, 452 Sixth Ave., at 11th St. (260-0250)—Don't be put off by the brown tweed carpet, the high ceilings and chandeliers, and the neat staff. This really is a Village jazz club. Right now it's presenting pianist **ELLIS LARKINS** two or three times a night between ten and two. Closed Sundays.

JIMMY RYAN'S, 154 W. 54th St. (CO 5-9505)—**ROY ELDRIDGE** is sixty-five, his hair is whitish, and he wears thick glasses, but the old drive is still there. His accompanists—**Dick Katz**

on piano, **Eddie Locke** on drums, **Joe Muranyi** on reeds, **Ted Sturgis** on bass, and **Bobby Pratt** on trombone—provide camouflage for Eldridge during the early part of the evening and ballast during the later part. Music weeknights from nine-thirty to three. On Sundays, **Max Kaminsky** directs another group of musical archivists from eight until two.

JIM SMITH'S VILLAGE CORNER, 142 Bleecker St., at LaGuardia Pl. (473-9762)—A cheerful bar on one of the corners where the Village meets N.Y.U.'s academic industrial park. Pianist **Lance Hayward** plays nightly, except Wednesdays, and is joined on Sundays by singer **Jane Valentine**. **Jim Roberts** is the Wednesday-night pianist. Live sounds from nine-thirty to three.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Pianist and composer **MATT DENNIS**, who is responsible for "Angel Eyes," "Let's Get Away from It All," "Will You Still Be Mine?" and other standards, finishes up his engagement with vocalist **GINNY DENNIS**, bassist **MILT HINTON**, and drummer **BOBBY ROSENGARDEN** on Saturday, April 24. On Tuesday, April 27, **Carol Sloane**, a jazz-inspired popular singer, will arrive with a solid backup crew—tenor saxophonist **Al Cohn**, pianist **Norman Simmons**, drummer **Ron Traxler**, and bassist **George Mraz**. Music from nine-fifteen to one. On Mondays, from nine-thirty to midnight, **Woody Allen** comes and goes, talking of **LoRENZO TIO**. Dinner and supper. Closed Sundays.

MIKELL'S, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—An often crowded upper West Side jazz-and-soul café. Local groups assemble under the canopied bandstand nearly every night. Music from ten until three. Dinner.

OTHER END, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—**Proctor** and **Bergman**, au-courant West Coast humorists, top the bill through Sunday, April 25. On Wednesday, April 28, **JIMMY WITHERSPOON**, who is also from the Coast but who got his blues-singing start in Kansas City in the forties, will begin a rare New York appearance. Shows begin at nine and eleven-thirty.

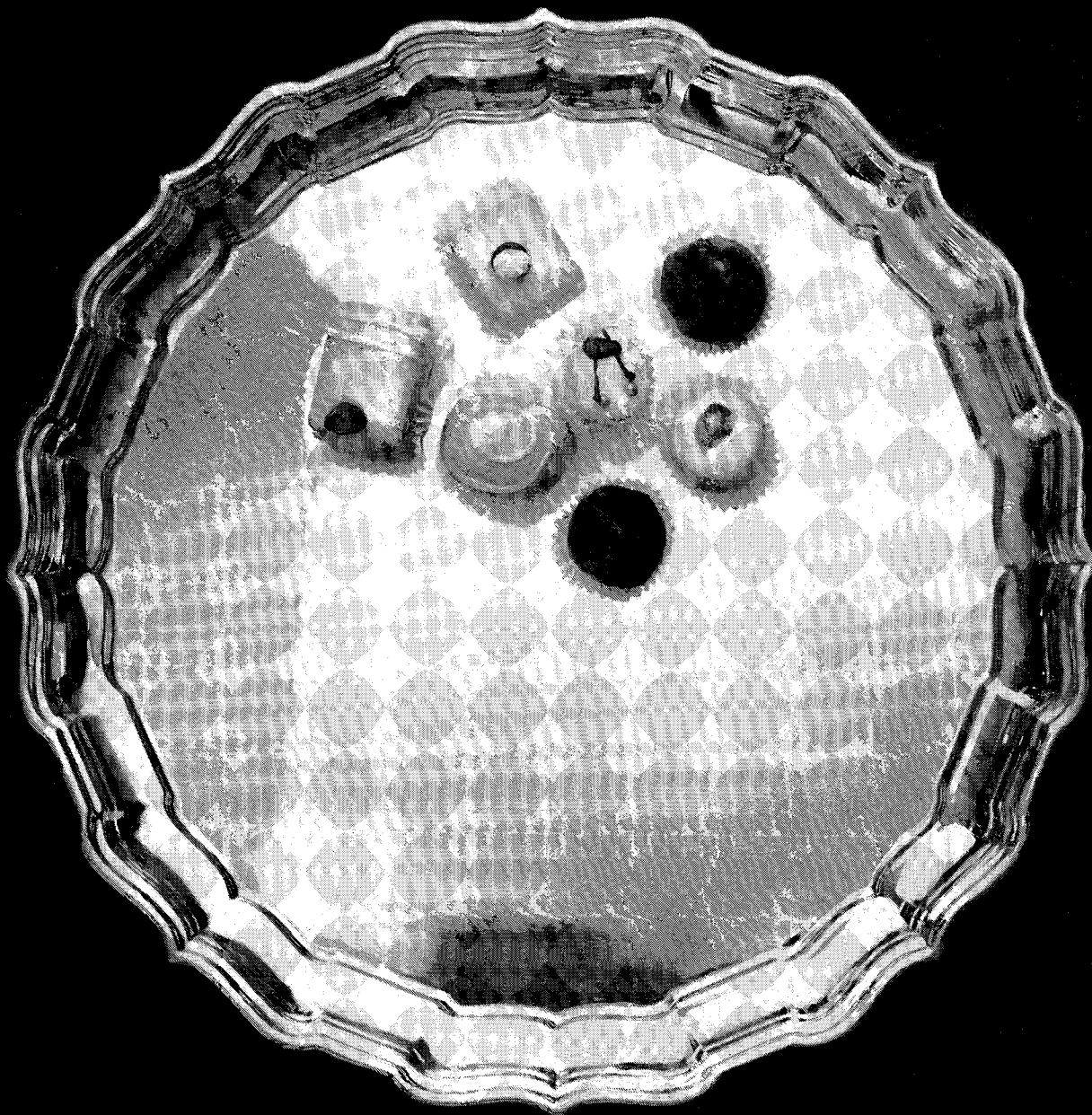
LE PETIT CAFÉ, Sherry-Netherland Hotel, Fifth Ave. at 50th St. (EL 5-2800)—**HANK JONES**, a delicate performer out of Tatum and Teddy Wilson, holds forth at the piano Mondays through Fridays from seven-thirty to twelve-thirty. Dinner and supper.

RAINBOW ROOM, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (PL 7-9090)—**SY OLIVER'S** band plays for listening, dancing, or just gawking out the windows. Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one; Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two; Sundays from six to midnight. Dining.

RENO SWEENEY, 126 W. 13th St. (601-0900)—Singers **Kelly Garrett** and **Jake Holmes** trade sets through Sunday, April 25, in this cabaret, perhaps the most attractive in town. Two other singers—**Garland Jeffreys** and **Gerri Griffin**—will take over starting Tuesday, April 27. Shows at nine and midnight. **BLOSSOM DEARIE**, who looks out steadily and brightly from inside the songs she sings, winds up her five-thirty-to-seven pocket concerts on Saturday, April 24. Mondays are showcases for new talent. Dining.

STORYVILLE, 41 E. 58th St. (755-1640)—**George Wein**, the producer of the Newport Jazz Festival—New York, is testing out a new policy. To wit: the music in the club changes from night to night, and passing musicians are welcome to sit in. The club does not advertise, but one can find out who will be playing on a given night by calling the above number. Music from nine to two. Closed Sundays.

STRYKER'S, 103 W. 86th St., at Columbus Ave. (874-8754)—This very pleasant upper West Side retreat presents a worthwhile assortment of jazz musicians as well as its Sunday-night special—**CHUCK WAYNE** and **JOE PUMA** guitar duets. On Mondays, **DAVE MATTHEWS'S** twelve-piece aggregation squeezes into the nook that serves as a bandstand. On Thursdays, **Eddie Daniels**, on tenor saxophone and flute, heads up a robust quartet that usually features bassist **Mike Moore** and guitarist **Gene Bertoncini**. On Friday and Saturday, April 23-24, **Larry Willis**, pianist for Blood, Sweat, and Tears, will lead a trio; and the following Friday and Saturday (April 30-May 1), the **Harold Ousley** quartet will take



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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on the musical chores. Music weeknights from nine-thirty; Sundays from nine. Snacks.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—The management here is partial to the jazz guitar and has instituted a two-and-a-half-month-long guitar festival. The lineup for the next week and a half includes: Through Saturday, April 24, the **JACK WILKINS** trio; Sunday through Tuesday, April 25-27, **MASUO**, solo guitarist; and beginning Wednesday, April 28, **JIM HALL** and his bassist. And there's more to come. The festival, which began last month, has done very well, attracting a largely young, attentive audience. It has apparently also lured a number of reverent guitar students and aspiring guitarists—every night, there are always a few guitars (cased, to be sure) brought in by starry-eyed patrons, and about thirty guitar picks have been found on the floor during the last few weeks. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays, and from ten on Fridays and Saturdays.

TIN PALACE, 325 Bowery, at 2nd St. (674-0566)—An attractive, hassle-free restaurant with an ever-changing music roster. The best thing going on here currently is the **TED CURSON** septet, a tight, gusty, moving outfit, which will be on the bandstand Fridays through Sundays. Music from ten-thirty, except Mondays. Dinner.

TOP OF THE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (982-9292)—The upstairs room in the Village Gate complex is alive and kicking with tourists, jazz enthusiasts, and jazzmen on Friday and Saturday nights. Willy drummer **CHICO HAMILTON** and his quintet share the facilities with tenor saxophonist **PHAROAH SANDERS** and his group. Music from ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (989-9011)—**CECIL TAYLOR**, a strenuous, long-distance pianist, tests the limits of his piano, his quintet, some of his listeners, and jazz. He'll be here through Sunday, April 25, and it will probably be difficult to get in. On Tuesday, April 27, the **GEORGE COLEMAN** octet will descend the murky staircase. On Mondays, the **THAD JONES-MEL LEWIS** band gets organized, eventually, and, when it does, it lets loose some big-band seriousness. Music from ten.

WEST BOONDOCK, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (924-9723)—Convenient to a New York City truck route but not much else, this bar has red Afro-psychedelic walls, hundreds of gold Christmas-tree ornaments hanging from the ceiling, and a tiny (about five by ten feet) soul-food kitchen. Other assets include sturdy, animated piano-bass duos that hold forth every night from eight until two.

WEST END CAFÉ, 2011 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—A wood-and-brick-walled retreat primarily patronized by Columbia students, who come to hear jazz—and somewhat old-fashioned jazz at that. Mondays and Tuesdays, trumpeter **Franc Williams**, Eddie Durham on trombone and electric guitar, pianist **Ram Ramirez**, and drummer **Shelton Gary** take the stand. Wednesdays, the **Warren Court**, a quintet led by ex-Basie saxophonist **Earle Warren**, is in session. Thursdays and Fridays are turned over to five bop-oriented musicians, and Saturdays and Sundays to a combo involving **SAMMY PRICE**, **BUDDY TATE**, **Ronnie Cole**, and **Paul Quinichette**. Music from nine to one.

WILLY'S, 7 W. 8th St. (260-0400)—Pianist **DAVE MATTHEWS**, guitarist **SAM BROWN**, and bassist **JOHN BEAL** are on hand through Saturday, April 24. On Wednesday, April 28, pianist **Paul Knopf** will bring in a trio. On Sundays, the piano is left in the capable, versatile, and entertaining hands of **JAKI BYARD**. Music from nine-thirty. Dinner.

JAZZ/FOLK/ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

INTERLUDES—A varied series of hour-long performances at Town Hall (JU 2-4536)—Wednesday, April 21, at 5:45: **JAMES CUNNINGHAM** AND THE **ACME DANCE COMPANY**. . . . Wednesday, April 28, at 5:45: **MICKI GRANT**.

SHIRLEY MACLAINE—With her chorus-line "gypsies." (Palace Theatre, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Mondays through Thursdays at 8, and Fridays and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Closes Saturday, May 1.)

VOICES OF JAZZ—Oscar Brown, Jr., and Blossom Dearie. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and La-

Guardia Pl. 598-3757. Wednesday, April 21, at 8.)

JAZZ BENEFIT—Al Cohn, Zoot Sims, Joe Venuti, Roland Hanna, Major Holley, Mousey Alexander, Bucky Pizzarelli, Roy Eldridge, and Dick Hyman. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Wednesday, April 21, at 9. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

STELLA MARRS TRIO—With the Keno Duke Contemporaries and others. (Town Hall. Thursday, April 22, at 8.)

THE CHIEFTAINS—Carnegie Hall, CI 7-7459. Thursday, April 22, at 8. . . . Avery Fisher Hall, TR 4-2424. Monday, April 26, at 8.

DAVID BROMBERG BAND AND **STEVE GOODMAN**—Avery Fisher Hall. Friday, April 23, at 8.

SUPERTRAMP AND **PAVLOV'S DOG**—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 874-1718. Friday, April 23, at 8.

MERLE HAGGARD—With Asleep at the Wheel. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Saturday, April 24, at 7 and 10.)

BETTY WALKER—Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Saturday, April 24, at 8.

SATCHMO '76—A benefit concert, with Lou Rawls, Freddie Hubbard, Thad Jones, Mel Lewis, Dee Dee Bridgewater, and Robin Kenyatta. (Beacon Theatre. Saturday, April 24, at 8:30.)

GROVER WASHINGTON, JR. (WITH ESTHER PHILLIPS) AND **DONALD BYRD & THE BLACKBIRDS**—Avery Fisher Hall. Saturday, April 24, at 8:30 and at midnight.

ROD MCKUEN—Carnegie Hall. Sunday, April 25, at 8.

THE TUBES AND **BE-BOP DELUXE**—Beacon Theatre. Sunday, April 25, at 8.

YAFFA YARKONI—Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday, April 28, at 8.

ELLINGTON IS FOREVER—Mercer Ellington conducting the Duke Ellington Orchestra, with Sarah Vaughan, Joe Williams, and the Hampton Choir, in a benefit concert. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Thursday, April 29, at 7:30. For tickets, call 541-7290.)

BOZ SCAGGS AND **THE SUTHERLAND BROTHERS & QUIVER**—Beacon Theatre. Thursday, April 29, at 8.

RAY CHARLES AND HIS ORCHESTRA WITH THE RAELETTES—Carnegie Hall. Friday, April 30, at 8.

BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS—Beacon Theatre. Friday and Saturday, April 30-May 1, at 7:30 and 11:30.

A TRIBUTE TO JIMMY HEATH—The premiere of "The Afro-American Suite of Evolution," composed and conducted by Jimmy Heath, with a thirty-five-piece concert orchestra and chorus, Stanley Cowell, Percy Heath, and others, plus the Jazzmobile Workshop Ensemble. (Town Hall. Saturday, May 1, at 8.)

NATIONAL JAZZ ENSEMBLE—Chuck Israels conducting the last in a series of concerts. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Saturday, May 1, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

ROBERTA FLACK—Avery Fisher Hall. Saturday, May 1, at 8:30.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

RUDOLF BAUER (1889-1953)—It seems odd that these abstract, Constructivist paintings, with their skillfully arranged clockworks of checks and balances, should already have acquired the aura of quaint antique pieces. Through June 15. (Hutton, 967 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

LELAND BELL—Landscapes, still-lives, and portraits by a figurative painter. Through May

15. (Schoelkopf, 825 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

NELL BLAINE—Forthright flower studies, seascapes, and other works in oil and watercolor, and ink-and-wash drawings. Through May 8. (Poindexter, 24 E. 84th St.)

GEORGE BOOTH—Cartoons and drawings. Through May 15. (Nicholls, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 5:30.)

BESSIE BORIS—There is a primitive quality about the carefully drawn ladderbacks and cabinets and other appointments in these period interiors, done in acrylics and chalk, each of which is the setting for the lone figure of an elderly woman. Through Friday, April 30. (Touchstone, in a new location, at 118 E. 64th St.)

HAROLD BRUDER—Realist paintings of New York City street scenes, along with portraits and landscapes. Through May 13. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

EDWARD PATRICK BYRNE (1877-1974)—Naïve paintings, mostly of domestic animals and proposed houses, by a Missouri dirt farmer who took up painting in his last thirty years and had an inborn sense of style, a purity of purpose that comes across clearly, and vigor enough to want to do a work entitled "Ava Gardner, Movie Star." Through Friday, April 30. (Kronen, 1094 Madison Ave., at 82nd St.)

CHARLES CAJORI—Drawings: a series in pencil, all of the same robed model, and another series, in tempera, ink, and charcoal, of figures in interiors. Through May 8. (Ingber, 3 E. 78th St.)

CLARENCE CARTER—A double exhibit: Early paintings (1926-51), including portraits and cityscapes (Gimpel, 1040 Madison Ave., at 79th St.), and a retrospective of the artist's works on paper (Carus, 1044 Madison Ave., at 79th St.). Both through May 29.

D. CLARK—Interpretive portraits of Walt Whitman and Chief Crazy Horse are part of a group of paintings that draw on American history for their content. Through May 8. (Bodley, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

JUD FINE—Sentence fragments (sometimes misspelled), fingerprints, triangles, and other cryptic markings applied to sheets of paper (in pencil, mostly) and shown collectively behind glass. Through Saturday, April 24. (Feldman, 33 E. 74th St.)

JEAN HÉLION—This lively French artist was a friend of both Mondrian and Léger, and in this show, which begins with his early abstract period and moves on to his current representational works, the influences of both men are discernible, as is a pronounced Gallic élan. Through May 22. (Samuels, 18 E. 76th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 5:30.)

BARKLEY HENDRICKS—Life-size portraits of young urban blacks; first one-man show in New York. Through May 8. (ACA, 25 E. 73rd St.)

MARGARET ISRAEL—This sorcerer's apprenticeship has long since ended, and she now applies her special craft to ceramic sculptures, constructions of wood and ceramics, and mural-size wall hangings with a sketched-in black-and-white pattern of everyday people. Some of the constructions incorporate human elements (ceramic heads, arms, and legs strung up like puppets and filled out anatomically with plate-size discs and surprising geometric forms), and some of them are built up in tiers, like Aztec temples. Through Saturday, May 1. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

IDA KOHLMAYER—Fresh, vigorous abstract oils, most of them big canvases in a checkerboard pattern of lively component abstracts, each a discrete composition of its own. The artist, from New Orleans, is new to the New York scene. Through Saturday, May 1. (Findlay, 984 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

ARMANDO MORALES—Semi-abstract oils of female nudes, who seem to be molded of some dark, exotic mineral. Also, solid still-lives of fruits—mainly pears—made of a similar material. Through Saturday, April 24. (Ault, 25 E. 77th St.)

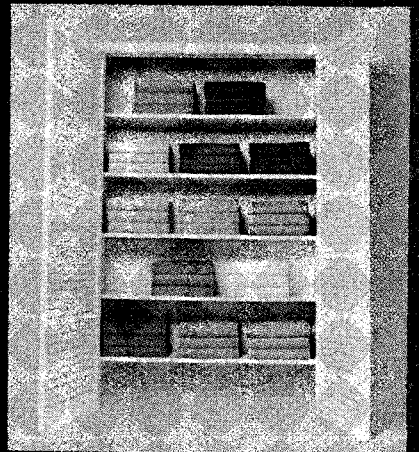
AMMI PHILLIPS (1788-1865)—Oil portraits of residents of the Hudson and Housatonic Valleys selected to show the artist's diverse

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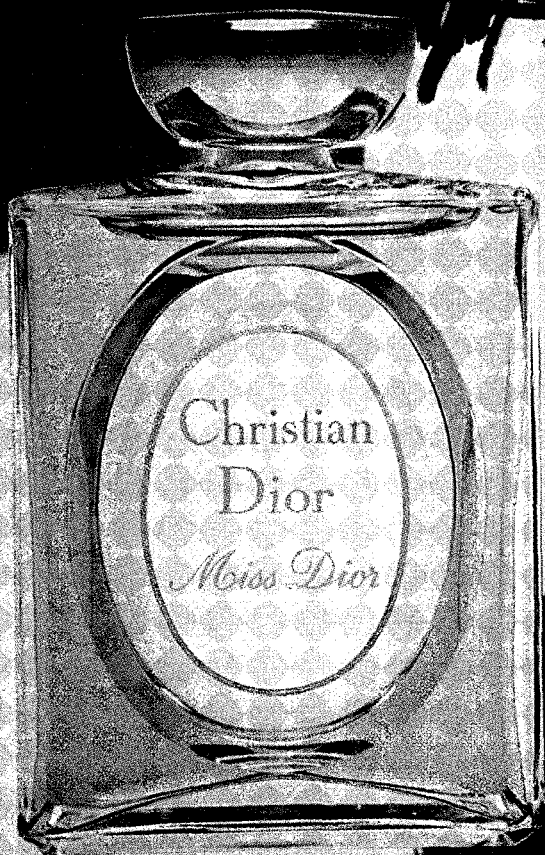


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styles. Through Saturday, May 1. (Washington, 820 Madison Ave., at 68th St.)

PAUL RESIKA—Lyrical landscapes: trees bowing to the wind or heavily laden with blossoms. Done mainly on Cape Cod, with an occasional side excursion to Martha's Vineyard. Through Saturday, April 24. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

GEORGE RICKEY / ULFERT WILKE—Abstract kinetic sculptures made of a combination of brass, copper, and stainless steel. / Large paintings based on calligraphy, plus drawings. Through Saturday, April 24. (Gurewitsch, 55 E. 74th St. Thursdays through Saturdays, 1 to 5.)

DAVID ROTH—Freestanding painted-string sculptures that have the appearance of columns, plus works on paper. Through Wednesday, April 28. (Elkon, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

JOCHEN SEIDEL (1924-71) / LOUIS COMTOIS—Crayon and pencil drawings of words in black-and-white and color. / Paintings composed of panels of muted color. Through Saturday, May 1. (Jackson, 32 E. 69th St.)

JOHN SLOAN (1871-1951)—A selection of landscapes, along with paintings of Washington Square Park and Grand Central Station, by one of the leading members of the Ashcan school. Through Saturday, May 1. (Kraushaar, 1055 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

PAT STEIR—Twenty new drawings, some in series and many incorporating handwritten phrases, in ink, pencil, and crayon. Through May 8. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

HAROLD STERNER (1895-1976)—Small, precise paintings with an otherworldly quality—an ornate steamboat on a dreamy river, for instance, or an English train speeding across a peaceful meadow—by a celebrated local architect who gave up his practice late in life and devoted himself to Surrealist works. Through Tuesday, April 27. (FAR Gallery, 746 Madison Ave., at 65th St. Open Mondays.)

MARK TOBEY—Fifty-eight paintings representing every phase of the artist's development, from representational figures to the "white writing" of his later years. Through Saturday, May 1. (Knoedler, 21 E. 70th St.)

JOE ZUCKER—Four representational paintings made entirely of cotton that has been dipped in acrylic and fastened to canvas. They depict such subjects as cotton bales and a University of Virginia law-school building. Through May 6. (Bykert, 24 E. 81st St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **BABCOCK**, 805 Madison Ave., at 68th St.: American landscape paintings by, among others, Joseph B. O'Sickey, Werner Groshans, and Margit Beck. Through Wednesday, April 28. ... **FEIST**, 1125 Madison Ave., at 84th St.: Drawings from five centuries. Two are a black-and-red chalk drawing by Rubens and a blue-gray brush drawing by Franz Kline. Through Saturday, May 1. (Open Mondays.) ... **HIRSCHL & ADLER**, 21 E. 67th St.: A benefit exhibition of paintings, sculptures, and drawings by Picasso, Sheeler, de Chirico, Nevelson, and others, on loan from the alumni of Williams College on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of that college's museum. Through Saturday, April 24. ... **STAEMPLI**, 47 E. 77th St.: Sculptures (by Harry Bertoia, Max Bill, and others) predominate in this show, which also has on view paintings by, among others, Enrico Donati and Paul Delvaux. Through Saturday, May 1. ... **STONE**, 48 E. 86th St.: Paintings by Kathy Calderwood and David McGovern, and sculptures by John Balsley. Through Thursday, April 29. ... **WILDENSTEIN**, 19 E. 64th St.: Examples (by Ingres, David, Clodion, and others) of French neoclassical paintings, drawings, and sculptures. Through May 15. (Open Mondays.)

SCULPTURE—Helen Beling, Sahl Swarz, and David Burt are contributors to a show of non-objective works in stone, wood, and steel. Through May 5. (Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St.)

QUICK LIST—Other artists currently being shown include: **SHIRLEY BLACK** at Alonzo, 26 E. 63rd St. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 6); **MARWAN** at Gruenebaum, 25 E. 77th St. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9 to 6); **SUSAN ROTHENBERG** at Willard, 29 E. 72nd St. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5:30); **MIKLOS SUBA (1880-1944)** at Weyhe, 794 Lexington Ave., at 61st St. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9:30 to 5); **D.W. TERESHKO** at

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Lerner-Heller, 789 Madison Ave., at 67th St. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5:30).

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

PAT ADAMS—Abstract oil paintings, and works on paper in gouache and mixed mediums. Through May 8. (Zabriskie, 29 W. 57th St.)

MICHÈLE AMATEAU—Oil paintings of grasses, rushes, reeds, and bodies of water in Utah and Colorado. Through May 5. (Kornblee, 20 W. 57th St.)

ANNE ARNOLD—Sculptures of animals, including a nearly life-size cow resting contentedly on the floor, and sure-handed drawings of animals—pigs, elephants, geese, cats, gorillas, and so on. Through Saturday, May 1. (Fischbach, 29 W. 57th St.)

PAUL CADMUS—Ink and crayon drawings and a couple of oils by this master of figure drawings. Through May 8. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

GIORGIO CAVALLON—Large abstract paintings. Through May 13. (Sachs, 29 W. 57th St.)

ELAINE LUSTIG COHEN—Large geometric abstractions dealing with spatial illusion and consisting of parallel diagonal bars painted on a two-color field. Through Saturday, April 24. (René, 6 W. 57th St.)

CHARLES HENRI FORD—A show of more than a hundred postcards sent over the years to this poet-photographer by his friends, among them Gertrude Stein, Robert Indiana, John Lennon, and Yoko Ono. Through Saturday, May 1. (Iolas, 52 E. 57th St.)

JULIO GONZÁLEZ (1876-1942)—A memorial exhibition of the angular sculptures of this pioneer in welded iron. Through Saturday, April 24. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

JOSEPH HIRSCH—Paintings of women dominate this exhibition of works by a veteran social realist. Through Saturday, April 24. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

HANS HOFMANN (1880-1966)—Paintings and works on paper from the late forties to the early fifties. Through Wednesday, April 28. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

WILLIAM KING—Caricatures of tennis players and their followers carved in wood by this humorous sculptor, who specializes in lanky, taller-than-life figures. Dominating the show is a skeleton entitled "Boo," who stands sixteen feet tall. Through May 8. (Dintenfass, in a new location, at 50 W. 57th St.) ... ¶ Additional works by the same artist—figures cut from a heavy silvery plastic and mounted on a white ground, and watercolor portraits—may be seen in an adjoining gallery, the Sumers. Also through May 8.

JOYCE KOZLOFF—Abstract paintings that are basically geometric shapes formed of mosaic patterns and bands of color. Through May 6. (De Nagy, 29 W. 57th St.)

MON LEVINSON—Paper works that have been dipped in various coloring agents, including tea and coffee, acrylics and ink, and then encased in Plexiglas frames. They have some of the appealing quality of antique documents, although not a word is written on them. Through Saturday, May 1. (Esman, 29 W. 57th St.)

JOAN MIRÓ—Some of the same dash and wit that go into this artist's paintings and graphics are present in the thirty-three pieces of sculpture in this exhibition, but there is also present, in the larger works, an undertone of solemnity that is probably inescapable in massive metal works. A number of the pieces are painted in bright, Miró colors, and they look like toys grown up. Through May 8. (Matisse, 41 E. 57th St.)

RICHARD POUSSETTE-DART / I. RICE PEREIRA (1905-71)—Recent abstract paintings by an artist who is a leading colorist. Through Wednesday, April 28. / About fifty paintings from all phases of this geometric abstractionist's career. Through May 8. (Crispo, 41 E. 57th St. Mondays through Fridays, 11:30 to 4:30; Saturdays, 10:30 to 5:30.)

ROGER WELCH—The last time around, this video artist gave us a relentless interview with a

man who had survived a plunge over Niagara Falls, and now he interviews a sextet of prizefighters, who talk about their craft on a video screen in a gallery set up to look like a boxing arena, complete with a standard ring (unoccupied), while taped fight-crowd noises compete with the boxers' monologues. Through May 12. (D'Arc, 15 E. 57th St.)

TOM WESSELMANN—A thirty-three-foot-long still-life comprised of four shaped canvases. The shapes of the canvases are determined by the subjects—a ring, a key ring, a tooth brush, and a cigarette. Also, new additions to his series on cigarette smokers. Through May 22. (Janis, 6 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

WILLIAM T. WILEY—Drawings, paintings, and constructions with a strong flavor of Wild West fantasies done by a California artist who writes long messages on his works and has a taste for bad puns ("Vague-a-Bond" and "He Ain't My Heavy, He's My Other") and a sort of cowboy disdain for the niceties of craftsmanship. Through Friday, April 30. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St. Open Mondays; open Saturdays at noon; closed Sundays.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **PARSONS**, 24 W. 57th St.: An exhibition marking the thirtieth anniversary of this gallery, where so many recent art movements were first recognized and helped to get off the ground. Included are works by Mark Rothko, Ad Reinhardt, Barnett Newman, Saul Steinberg, and Hedda Sterne. Through Saturday, April 24. ... **PARSONS-TRUMAN**, 24 W. 57th St.: Joe Neill, Barbara Zucker, and others are exhibitors in a show of works that range from colored-rubber floor pieces and ceramic pillows to ladders and tents. Through May 15.

GALLERIES—SoHo

CHARLES FAHLEN—Distinctive wall pieces and floor constructions, in both of which unusual shapes are fashioned from unusual materials (mostly resinous) and, in many cases, linked together with long hinges. Through May 5. (Duffy, 157 Spring St.)

LIBOR FARA—Wood constructions made from found objects, most of them parts of furniture. Also collages. First one-man show in New York. Through Saturday, April 24. (Ariadne, 410 West Broadway.)

AUDREY FLACK / JEROME KIRK—Photo-Realist paintings of fruit, pastry, and personal objects. / Table-size kinetic sculptures. Through Saturday, May 1. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

PINCHAS COHEN GAN—Wispily, hesitant paintings, mostly of figures, sketched in on cloth by an Israeli artist who has dour views about what the world is coming to and who supports his theses with impressive and no doubt germane mathematical equations doodled in here and there. Through May 6. (Protetch, 157 Spring St.)

JOE GIORDANO—Plant-filled interiors, and portraits. Through May 6. (Green Mountain, 135 Greene St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.)

REBECCA HORN—The center of this exhibition by an artist who divides her time between here and Berlin is a black cylindrical kiosk, about eight feet tall, with six doors that, once a visitor steps within, close simultaneously, like a *Dionaea muscipula* around a housefly. When all is dark inside, a taped murmur of Chinese girls whispering is heard for half a minute or so, and then the doors open. The name of this structure is "The Chinese Fiancee." Also shown are a number of drawings, some related to the kiosk and some to other projects of the artist. First solo show in New York. Through Saturday, April 24. (Block, 409 West Broadway.)

BERNARD KIRSCHENBAUM—Large, glistening sculptures in aluminum and stainless steel, usually involving two geometric shapes nested together—a half moon cradled in a precisely congruent arc, for instance. Through May 29. (Sculpture Now, 142 Greene Street.)

BILL MARTIN / PETER PLACENS—Fantasy landscapes painted in an odd, meticulously detailed style on circular canvases. / Partly eclipsed circles painted on contrasting subdued fields of layered oil and crayon. Through Wednesday, April 28. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

ROBERT MORRIS—Wood and metal sculptures, mostly. Through May 8. (Castelli, and Sonnabend, both at 420 West Broadway.)

DOUG OHLSON—Great big canvases that explore practically all the ramifications of red one can

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imagine, from pale tomato to darkest oxblood. The paintings seem at first (or even second) glance to be simple solid-color fields, but then the under painting comes swimming into view. Through Wednesday, April 28. (Caldwell, 383 West Broadway.)

ANNETTE OKO/SUSAN TUNICK—Realist paintings of the façades of New York buildings, among them such watering places as McBell's and Teacher's. Large, vertically oriented abstracts, in which a strip of some kind of fabric seems to be taking form. Through Saturday, May 1. (SoHo Center for Visual Artists, 112 Prince St. Tuesdays through Fridays, 1 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 5.)

MARTIN SCHREIBER—Interwoven bands of color in geometric shapes. Through May 5. (Razor, 464 West Broadway, Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.)

WILLIAM SCHWEDLER—Heavily textured abstract paintings that are divided up, like stained-glass windows, into sections marked off by thickly painted lines. Some of the inner compartments convey an impression of cellular growth. Through May 4. (Alessandra, 489 Broome St.)

JACKIE WINSOR—Five boxlike sculptures in wood and copper wire. Through May 5. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

QUICK LIST—Other artists currently showing their work in SoHo include: **STEPHEN GARMEY** at 14 Sculptors, 75 Thompson St. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6); **CHARLES PATRICK** at Aames, 93 Prince St. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5).

OTHER GALLERIES

DON FREEMAN—Paintings, drawings, and graphics. Through June 12. (Feiden, 51 E. 10th St. Open Mondays; open Saturdays at noon; closed Sundays.)

SOL LEWITT—Five modular aluminum sculptures that are finished in white enamel. Through May 15. (Hammarskjöld Plaza Sculpture Garden, Second Ave. at 47th St.)

MARTIN LUBNER—Portraits and figure paintings by a California artist who uses the same sort of raw, searching draftsmanship one finds in Alice Neel's works; who spends a good deal of time in London (one large oil depicts a cosmopolitan crush in the Underground); and who catches the dogginess of dogs convincingly. Through Saturday, April 24. (Roko, 90 E. 10th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

DOROTHY NORMAN—In 1927, Mrs. Norman met Alfred Stieglitz at his Intimate Gallery and was so captivated by his gruff sententiousness that she made a vow "to share what I heard him say" with the world at large. Accordingly, she met with him almost daily for the next twenty years, writing down all his words and subsequently publishing great extracts from his conversation, first in "Alfred Stieglitz: Introduction to an American Seer" (1960), and then in the fuller, illustrated biography, "Alfred Stieglitz: An American Seer" (1973). During her Boswellian period, Mrs. Norman posed for Stieglitz (a number of the portraits appear in both books and show her as a very handsome and very worried young woman), and also learned to take pictures of her own with a Graflex camera he gave her. This exhibition is largely made up of the photographs she took in the thirties under the Seer's tutelage, and includes a group of portraits of Stieglitz; studies of Cape Cod churches, gravestones, and plants; and portraits of John Marin, Morris Graves, Marcel Duchamp, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Bertolt Brecht, and other artists. One is initially struck by the extreme, almost obtrusive smallness of the photographs—most are contact prints of three-and-a-quarter-by-four-and-a-half-inch Graflex negatives, and some are slight enlargements of two-by-two-inch Rolleiflex negatives—but, once one gets one's eye in, one perceives how accomplished and finished these quiet little pictures are. Each is permeated with a quality of deliberation, care, patience, seriousness, and unhurriedness that (one realizes) is anachronistic in this age of small cameras that go click-click-click and give birth to enormous, grainy blowups of adventitious images. The icy understanding of photography's awesome simplicity and complexity that shines out of Stieglitz's im-

ages is present in those of his pupil, and though they are lesser works they are not negligible, and though they derive from Stieglitz's example they are not derivative. From these photographs one receives a glimpse of Stieglitz's artistic, and even moral, forcefulness (which one never receives from Mrs. Norman's worshipful writings or heavy quotations), and from a late portrait of Stieglitz, in which he is lying down and smiling up at the photographer, one gets a moving sense of the affection that existed between the tired old man and the worried young woman. Through Friday, April 30. (Ex Libris, 25 E. 69th St. Mondays through Fridays, noon to 5.)

CECIL BEATON—This exhibition of photographs from the estate of Joseph Cornell is a warning to photographers who send terrible pictures to their friends as jokes. Arrangements of kitschy figurines, flowers, and jewelry, and pictures of celebrities in extravagantly preposterous poses (such as "Princess Paley and unidentified male model"), form the bulk of this embarrassing display. Embarrassing in a different way are the numerous portraits of Beaton as a delicious-looking young man, some taken by the photographer himself, and others by other admirers. Through Thursday, April 29. (Schoelkopf, 825 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

WYNN BULLOCK (1902-75)—Exquisite, craftsmanly landscapes and nature studies by a California photographer who died last year. Bullock sometimes introduces figures into his compositions to achieve surreal effects, but most of the work is the usual beautiful, boring, Weston-derived West Coast nature picture. The show comes complete with a statement proclaiming (but not divulging) the photographer's "consciously articulated metaphysical concepts" and an endorsement by Ansel Adams. It is not a museum-calibre show. Through May 2. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

BARON DE MEYER (1869-1946)—Early photo-gravures (still-lives, fashion subjects, and society people), many of them originally published in Stieglitz's *Camera Work*. Through Saturday, May 1. (Helios, 26 E. 78th St.)

FRED FEHL—Three hundred photographs of dancers, actors, and musicians in performance. Through May 29. (New York Public Library at Lincoln Center. Weekdays, noon to 6, and Monday and Thursday evenings until 9.)

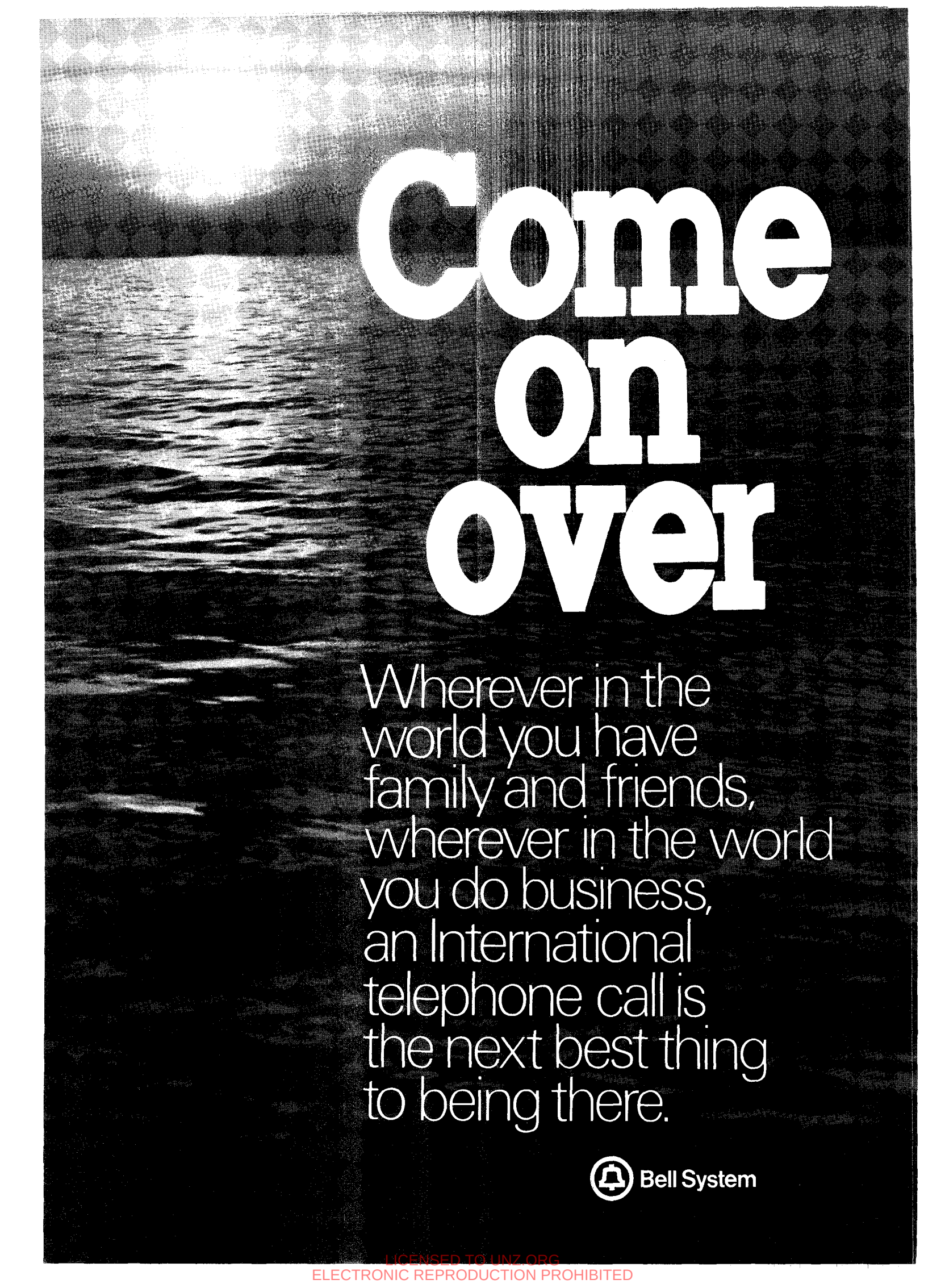
ROBERT FICHTER/MICHAEL BISHOP—Landscapes, interiors, and portraits done in various processes, plus drawings and graphics. Color photographs of sidewalks and back yards. Through Saturday, May 1. (Light, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

JUDY FISKIN—Black-and-white photographs of the desert. Through Saturday, May 1. (Castelli Graphics, 4 E. 77th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY**, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St., through May 16: Exhibitions of works by photographers Clarence John Laughlin, Michael P. Smith, David Plowden, and James Klosty. (Open Sundays.)... **KNOEDLER**, 21 E. 70th St.: "Photography of the Thirties," an exhibition bringing together representative work by Horst, Cecil Beaton, Bill Brandt, Walker Evans, Berenice Abbott, and others. Through Saturday, May 1... **NEIKRUG**, 224 E. 68th St.: Photographs of mainland China by René Burri, Audrey Topping, and Chinese photographers. Through Saturday, May 1. (Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)... **WITKIN**, 41 E. 57th St.: Part II of an exhibit of work taken from Alfred Stieglitz's quarterly *Camera Work*, including photogravures made by Steichen, the late Paul Strand, and others, as well as drawings by such artists as Rodin and Matisse. Also on view are twelve issues of the magazine 291. Through Saturday, May 1. (Open Thursday evenings until 8.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"The World of Franklin and Jefferson," an exhibit of artifacts, paintings, manuscripts, and photographs dealing with, to no one's surprise, the early history of this country. Through May 2... Portraits of, and clothing worn by, ten American women—Isadora



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Duncan, Josephine Baker, and Irene Langhorne Gibson among them—noted for their innovation and elegance in dress. Through Sept. 5. . . . ¶ A loan show of drawings and etchings by the seventeenth-century court painter Jacques Bellange, plus works by artists who influenced him and whom he influenced. Through May 2. . . . ¶ A small show of Chinese landscape paintings dating from the eleventh century through the eighteenth. Through Aug. 1. . . . ¶ Photographs by Wynn Bullock; see above, under "Photography." Through May 2. (Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—More than a hundred Fauvist paintings, whose sunshine-bright, garden-fresh colors still have a tingling shock value seventy years after their first formal showing shook up the art establishment in Paris. Matisse, Braque, Derain, Vlaminck, Marquet, and van Dongen are among the wild beasts in this engrossing exhibition. Through June 1. . . . ¶ Picasso, Mondrian, and Feininger are among the artists represented in a survey of Cubism and allied movements, made up of drawings and prints from the museum's collection and covering the years 1906 to 1922. Through May 9. . . . ¶ Paintings by Morgan Russell drawn from his Synchronist period, along with related drawings, studies, and notebooks. Through May 25. (Daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A full-scale exhibition of the museum's collection of early-twentieth-century European paintings. Chronologically arranged, the show includes works by Cézanne, Mondrian, Klee, and Miró. Through Oct. 3. (Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—If the Good Lord plans a visit down here and is looking around for suitable accommodations, a perfectly resplendent throne room, big enough and gorgeous enough for Him and the Heavenly entourage, is available in the ground-floor gallery to the left of the elevators. It is the creation of a Washington, D.C., janitor, who in the last fifteen years of his life worked off his excess religious zeal by putting it together in a garage space he rented, where it was discovered after his death. It consists of found objects—light bulbs, chair rungs, decorative oddments—all wrapped in glistening metal foil. The janitor's name was James Hampton, he died in 1964, and he has surely taken his place on the architectural staff up yonder. . . . ¶ A vast historical survey of American sculpture of the past two hundred years, complete with primitive weathervanes and figureheads, super-classical statues (Washington as Phidias might have depicted him), Hiram Powers' celebrated Greek Slave, works by the Calders (father and son), and on to David Smith and the earth-works Conceptualists. A really big show, occupying all three floors, which will last through the summer. (Tuesdays, 11 to 10, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

WHITNEY DOWNTOWN MUSEUM, 55 Water St., two blocks south of Wall St.—"Print Making/New Forms" includes works by Rauschenberg, Marisol, and Jody Shields. Through May 19. (Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 3.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—Folk sculptures that date from the eighteenth century to the present by artisans from all over the United States. One piece, done in the twenties, is a trade sign for a Brooklyn bicycle shop. Through May 31. . . . ¶ Contemporary Japanese ceramics, including about twenty-five pieces by Kitaoji Rosanjin, together with sword guards from a private collection. Through June 27. This exhibit opens at 1:30 on Fridays and Saturdays. (Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A display showing the techniques used by the museum's staff of artists, taxidermists, model-makers, and other reproduction specialists in mounting installations. Through July 31. (Weekdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 5.)

ASIA HOUSE, 112 E. 64th St.—Nearly sixty hand scrolls and hanging scrolls, the majority of them ink landscapes, by Wen Cheng-ming

(1470-1559) and by his teacher, Shen Chou. Through June 6. (Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

JAPAN HOUSE, 333 E. 47th St.—Forty-six Japanese swords and their furnishings, including the "Kunimune" blade, dating from the twelfth century through the nineteenth. Through Sunday, April 25. (Mondays through Thursdays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 7:30; Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—A survey of the illustrated book in England, covering the years 1790 to 1914. It includes books, drawings, engravers' proofs, autograph letters, and manuscripts, and among the artists on view are Blake, Turner, Beardsley, and Beer-bohm. Through May 2. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

MUSEUM OF AMERICAN FOLK ART, 49 W. 53rd St.—Folk art on paper, or made with paper, most of it done by New York artists. Through June 2. (Daily, except Mondays, 10:30 to 5:30.)

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY CRAFTS, 29 W. 53rd St.—An exhibit of contemporary American quilts. . . . ¶ Clay soup tureens that were designed for a national competition. . . . ¶ Locks and keys dating from the fourteenth century through the eighteenth, on loan from the Cooper-Hewitt Museum of Design. All three exhibitions through June 13. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—An exhibition of theatrical memorabilia celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Shubert organization. Through Oct. 31. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY AT LINCOLN CENTER—"Ruth Page: Ballet Is a World Apart" is the title of a series of photographs, letters, posters, costume designs and some of the costumes themselves, and other memorabilia celebrating her fifty years on the ballet stage. Through May 7. (Mondays and Thursdays, 10 to 9; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10 to 6; Saturdays, noon to 6.) . . . ¶ Theatre photographs by Fred Fehl. Through May 29. (Weekdays, noon to 6, and Monday and Thursday evenings until 9.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Avery Fisher Hall is TR 4-2424, for Carnegie Hall CI 7-7459, and for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—Final performances of the season—Wednesday, April 21, at 8: "The Ballad of Baby Doe," with Ruth Welting, Frances Bible, Jane Shaulis, and Richard Fredricks; conducted by Judith Somogi. . . . ¶ Thursday, April 22, at 8: "Lizzie Borden," with Eileen Schauler, Ellen Faull, Elizabeth Hynes, and Edward Pierson; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Friday, April 23, at 8: "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Elizabeth Haley, Sandra Walker, Tullio Pané, and Sigmund Cowan; Luigi Martelli. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 24, at 2: "Carmen," with Olivia Stapp, Sung-Sook Lee, and Herman Malamood; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 24, at 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Maralin Niska, Diane Curry, Puli Toro, and Lando Bartolini, and "Pagliacci," with Maralin Niska, Ermanno Mauro, Pablo Elvira, and Dominic Cossa; Luigi Martelli. . . . ¶ Sunday, April 25, at 1: "The Ballad of Baby Doe," with Ruth Welting, Muriel Costa-Greenspon, Jane Shaulis, and Chester Ludgin; Judith Somogi. . . . ¶ Sunday, April 25, at 7: "Lizzie Borden," with Eileen Schauler, Ellen Faull, Elizabeth Hynes, and Edward Pierson; Imre Pallo. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. TR 7-4727.)

JUILLIARD AMERICAN OPERA CENTER—Benefit performances of a double bill: The United States premiere of Goffredo Petrassi's "Il Cordovano" ("The Tapestry"), in English, directed by Jack O'Brien; and the premiere of Hugo Weisgall's "The Hundred Nights," directed by John Olon-Scrymgeour. John DeMain will conduct the Juilliard Theatre Orchestra for the first opera, and Bruce Ferdin will conduct it for the second one. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Thursday, April 22, and Saturday, April 24, at 8, and Sunday, April 25, at 3. For information about tickets, call 799-5000, Ext. 235.)

OPERA HIGHLIGHTS—Joseph Lliso conducting the

With the 115, Sony technology has created the all-purpose black and white portable.

It's compact enough to take anywhere.

And big enough to stay home and serve as your sole television set.

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In addition to its glare-free screen, the 115 has something that's rather rare in portable black and whites. It has all solid-state circuitry for more dependable, trouble-free viewing.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Pan American Symphony Orchestra in a benefit concert, with Licia Albanese, Joann Grillo, Frank Guarrera, Louis Sgarro, and others. (Town Hall. JU 2-4536. Sunday, April 25, at 6.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Pierre Boulez conducting, with Judith Blegen, soprano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Thursday, April 29, at 8:30; Friday, April 30, at 2; and Tuesday, May 4, at 7:30.)

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA—Eugene Ormandy directing the final performance of the season here, with André Watts, piano; Benita Valente, soprano; and the Singing City Choirs. (Carnegie Hall. Monday, April 26, at 8:15.)

PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY—William Steinberg conducting a performance of Berlioz' choral symphony "Romeo and Juliet," with Joy Davidson, mezzo-soprano; Gene Bullard, tenor; Ara Berberian, bass-baritone; and the Westminster Choir. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, April 28, at 8.)

BROOKLYN PHILHARMONIA—Lukas Foss directing the third in a "Meet the Moderns" series of four concerts, this one devoted to contemporary Greek composers, with Yuji Takahashi, piano; Spyros Sakkas, baritone; and the Gregg Smith Singers. Iannis Xenakis will be present and will participate in a discussion with Mr. Foss at the end of the evening. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Wednesday, April 21, at 8.)

CLARION CONCERT—Newell Jenkins conducting the final concert of the season, with Jan DeGaetani, mezzo-soprano; Henry Schuman, oboe; and others. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, April 21, at 8:30.)

NETHERLANDS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA—Szymon Goldberg conducting and acting as violin soloist in the second of two all-Bach programs, this one with Ransom Wilson, flute. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, April 21, at 8.)

OUR BACH CONCERT—Twenty musicians, including Henry Schuman, oboe; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord; Thomas Nyfenger, flute; and Gerard Schwarz, trumpet, who perform without a conductor, in a Mozart-Beethoven program. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, April 24, at midnight.)

ENGLISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA—Daniel Barenboim conducting and acting as piano soloist in the first three in a series of nine concerts of Mozart concertos. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, April 27; Thursday, April 29; and Saturday, May 1, all at 8.)

GLEE CLUB OF THE FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK—George Mead directing. (Town Hall. JU 2-4536. Friday, April 23, at 8:30.)

CONCORDIA CHOIR—Ralph C. Schultz directing. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, April 24, at 3.)

BARNARD-COLUMBIA CHORUS AND MADRIGAL CHOIR—Gregg Smith and Peter Schubert directing a program of music from Colonial times to the present. (St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. Saturday, April 24, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

SINE NOMINE SINGERS—Harry Saltzman directing a program of music from the Old World at the time of the first colonies here. The last in a series of concerts. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Saturday, April 24, at 8.)

ST. CECILIA CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA—David Randolph directing Brahms' Requiem and Beethoven's "Choral Fantasy," with Betty Lane, soprano; John Cheek, bass-baritone; and John Challener, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, April 25, at 2:30.)

NEW YORK CHORAL SOCIETY—Robert DeCormier directing the final concert of the season, with a symphony orchestra and soloists. (Avery Fisher Hall. Friday, April 30, at 8.)

RECITALS

DONALD GRAMM—Bass-baritone, in a recital postponed from Feb. 24. (Town Hall. JU 2-4536. Wednesday, April 21, at 8.)

DA CAPO CHAMBER PLAYERS—The last in a series of concerts of contemporary music, this one with Bethany Beardslee, soprano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Wednesday, April 21, at 8.)

NEW AND NEWER MUSIC—A program performed by Speculum Musicae. (New York Public Library at Lincoln Center Auditorium, 111 Amsterdam Ave., at 65th St. Thursday, April

22, at 7:30. For tickets, which will not be on sale at the auditorium, call 362-1911.)

JOHN GRAHAM—Viola/violin, with Elizabeth Wright, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, April 22, at 8.)

AMADEUS STRING QUARTET—Chamber music. (Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. 535-5350. Thursday, April 22, at 8, the fourth in a series of six concerts presenting the Beethoven cycle. ... Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, May 1, at 8, with Richard Stoltzman, clarinet. For tickets, call 586-4680.)

MARILYN HORNE—Mezzo-soprano, in a program of operatic arias. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, April 23, at 8.)

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER—Oscar Shumsky, violin; Walter Trampler, viola; Leslie Parnas, cello; and others. (Alice Tully Hall. Friday, April 23, at 8, and Sunday, April 25, at 5.)

JULIUS BAKER AND PAULA ROBISON—Flute. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, April 24, at 8. For tickets, call 586-4680.)

FRANCO GULLI AND ENRICA CAVALLO—Violin and piano, in a sonata recital. (Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. 535-5350. Saturday, April 24, at 8.)

CHAMBER MUSIC—Donald Weilerstein, violin; Scott Nickrenz, viola; Laurence Lesser, cello; and Leon Kirchner, piano. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Saturday, April 24, at 8:30, and Sunday, April 25, at 2.)

WATER GAP CONCERT—The last in a series of chamber-music concerts. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Saturday, April 24, at midnight. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

ALFRED BRENDL—Piano, in the second in a series of three Bach-Beethoven-Liszt recitals. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, April 25, at 3.)

ENSEMBLE FOR EARLY MUSIC—A program of baroque solos, duets, and trios. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Sunday, April 25, at 4:30. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

DAVID CRAIGHEAD—Organ. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, April 25, at 8.)

JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET—The last in a series of concerts presenting the Beethoven cycle. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Tuesday, April 27, at 8.)

BETTY JONES—Soprano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Tuesday, April 27, at 8:30.)

ANTHONY NEWMAN—Organ, in the fourth in a series of five all-Bach programs. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, April 28, at 8.)

TASHI—The last in a series of concerts. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Wednesday, April 28, at 8.)

MUSIC FROM MARLBORO—The final concert of the season, this one played by Jaime Laredo and Lucy Chapman, violin; Heichiro Ohyama and Daniel Phillips, viola; and Sharon Robinson, cello. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 879-5512. Thursday, April 29, at 8. All seats have been sold, and only standing room is left.)

ITZHAK PERLMAN—Violin. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Saturday, May 1, at 8.)

MISCELLANY

PERCY GRAINGER RETROSPECTIVE CONCERT—A program of his music, performed by Cheryl Seltzer, piano; Joel Sachs, acting as pianist and conductor; the Gail August Dancers; a string quartet; chamber ensembles; solo voices; and the Columbia University Concert Band, conducted by Roger Nierenberg. (McMillin Theatre, Broadway at 116th St. Thursday, April 22, at 8. Tickets at the box office on the night of the concert.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for the Nassau Coliseum, Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I., is 516 794-9100.)

BASEBALL—YANKEES at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Chicago, Wednesday, April 21, at 2. ... KANSAS CITY, Friday, April 23, at 8, and Saturday and Sunday, April 24-25, at 2. ... METS at

Shea Stadium: Vs. Atlanta, Monday through Thursday, April 26-29, at 4:05. . . . Houston, Friday, April 30, at 8:05, and Saturday, May 1, at 2:15.

PROFESSIONAL BASKETBALL—American Basketball Association Eastern Division playoffs: Nets vs. San Antonio. (Nassau Coliseum, Sunday, April 25, if necessary.)

CREW—Childs Cup Regatta: Columbia, Pennsylvania, and Princeton. (Philadelphia, Saturday, April 24.) . . . Goes Trophy Regatta: Cornell, Navy, and Syracuse. (Annapolis, Saturday, May 1.) . . . Compton Cup Regatta: Harvard, M.I.T., and Princeton. (Cambridge, Saturday, May 1.)

HOCKEY—Stanley Cup East Division quarter-final playoffs: Islanders vs. Buffalo Sabres. (Nassau Coliseum, Thursday, April 22, at 8:05.)

RACING—At **AQUEDUCT**: Weekdays at 1:30; through Saturday, May 1. The Top Flight Handicap, Saturday, April 24, and the Carter Handicap, Saturday, May 1. . . . **GARDEN STATE PARK**, Cherry Hill, N.J.: Weekdays at 2; through Thursday, June 10. The Trenton Handicap, Saturday, April 24. . . . **CHURCHILL DOWNS**, Louisville, Ky.: The Kentucky Derby, Saturday, May 1.

PRO TENNIS—World Team Tennis players—Billie Jean King, Evonne Goolagong, Fred Stolle, Marty Riessen, and others—in a benefit tournament. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Tuesday, April 27, at 1 and 8.)

TRACK—Penn Relays. (Philadelphia, Friday and Saturday, April 23-24.)

TROTTING—At **YONKERS RACEWAY**: Weeknights at 8; through Monday, May 17. . . . **SARATOGA RACEWAY**, Saratoga Springs: Weeknights at 8:15; through Saturday, Nov. 13.

ET ALIA

POETRY READINGS—At the **NEW SCHOOL**: W. S. Merwin reading from his own works, Wednesday, April 21, at 8. . . . Jon Anderson, Louise Glück, and Robert Haas reading from their own works, Friday, April 23, at 7:30. (66 W. 12th St. Tickets at the box office on the nights of the readings.) . . . **JEFFERSON MARKET LIBRARY**: Edward Field and Richard Howard reading from their own works. (Sixth Ave. at 10th St. Monday, April 26, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.) . . . **92ND STREET Y**: Kathleen Fraser and Adrienne Rich reading from their own works, Monday, April 26, at 8. . . . Emer R. Monegal reading from the works of Jorge Luis Borges, in Spanish, with English translations read by W. S. Merwin and Richard Howard, and with comment (in English) by Señor Borges, Thursday, April 29, at 8. (Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000.) . . . **DONNELL LIBRARY AUDITORIUM**: Donald Justice and James Wright reading from the works of Weldon Kees, H. Phelps Putnam, and their contemporaries. (20 W. 53rd St. Tuesday, April 27, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

FLOWER SHOW—The April Flower Show of the Horticultural Society of New York, 128 W. 58th St. Wednesday, April 21, from noon to 6.

WALKING TOUR—"The Fashionable Brooklyn of a Century Ago," a conducted tour sponsored by the Museum of the City of New York, will get into stride on Sunday, April 25. It will meet on the steps of Borough Hall, Brooklyn, at 2:30.

Flea Market—The New York Flea Market, at Sixth Ave. and 25th St., is open every Sunday, weather permitting, from noon to 7.

AUCTIONS—At the Sotheby Parke Bernet, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)—Wednesday, April 21, at 10:15 and 2: Oriental works of art, from many sources. . . . Thursday, April 22, at 2: Paintings by Ming and Ch'ing masters, from the Lok Tsai Hsien Collection. . . . Tuesday, April 27, at 10:15 and 2: American, English, and Continental silver, from various owners. Exhibition starts Thursday, April 22. . . . Wednesday, April 28, at 2: Jewelry, from a number of owners. Exhibition starts Saturday, April 24. . . . Thursday, April 26, at 2: Nineteenth- and twentieth-century American paintings, drawings, and sculptures, from the estate of Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge and from other sources. Exhibition starts Saturday, April 24.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME—Starts Sunday, April 25, at 2 A.M. Clocks should be turned ahead an hour.

Sam Snead goes for The Homestead's birdies. And our Virginia pheasant.

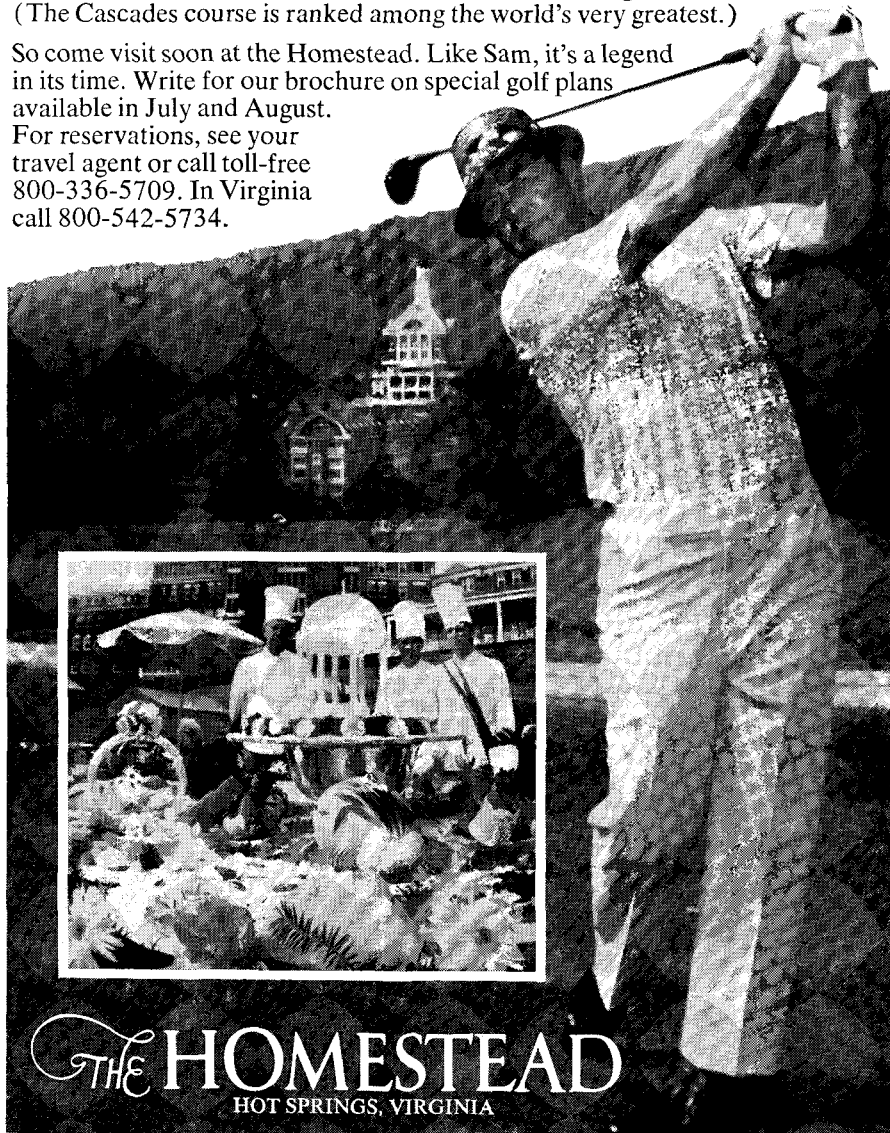
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

EAST SIDE

ART, 36 E. 8th. (GR 3-7014)
"The Story of Adele H."

ST. MARKS CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (777-1955)
Through April 27: "The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother" and "W. W. and the Dixie Dancekings."
From April 28: "Barry Lyndon."

CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through April 27: "Bugs Bunny Superstar."
From April 28: "Hester Street."

GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (GR 5-1660)
Through April 27: "Barry Lyndon."
From April 28: "Hester Street."

KIPS BAY, 2nd Ave. at 31st. (684-2290)
Through April 27: "Next Stop, Greenwich Village."
From April 28: "Hester Street."

MURRAY HILL, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"Family Plot."

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
April 21: "W. C. Fields and Me."
From April 22: "Mean Streets."

EASTSIDE CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through April 27: "Bugs Bunny Superstar."
From April 28: "Merry Go Round."

SUTTON, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (PL 9-1411)
"The Bad News Bears."

TRANS-LUX EAST, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (PL 9-2262)
Through April 24: "The Duchess and the Dirtwater Fox."
From April 25: "Stay Hungry."

FINE ARTS, 130 E. 58th. (755-6030)
"The River Niger."

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (EL 5-3320)
"Seven Beauties."

BARONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
April 21: "W. C. Fields and Me."
From April 22: "Mean Streets."

CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"The Sailor Who Fell from Grace with the Sea."

D. W. GRIFFITH, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Mabler."

CINEMA I, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-6022)
"Fantasia" and "Alice in Wonderland."

CINEMA II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-0774)
"Fantasia" and "Alice in Wonderland."

COLUMBIA I, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
"Taxi Driver." (Evening performances only.)

COLUMBIA II, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-2720)
"Lies My Father Told Me."

BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (RE 7-2622)
"Face to Face."

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (RE 4-0302)
"Virility."

LOEWS TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"All the President's Men."

72ND STREET EAST, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (BU 8-9304)
Through April 27: "Next Stop, Greenwich Village."
From April 28: "Lies My Father Told Me."

JULIET I, 3rd Ave. at 83rd. (249-1806)
To be announced.

JULIET 2, 3rd Ave. at 83rd. (249-1806)
To be announced.

TRANS-LUX 85TH ST., Madison at 85th. (BU 8-3180)
"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest."

U. A. EAST, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"The River Niger."

LOEWS ORPHEUM, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
"Family Plot."

LOEWS CINÉ, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (427-1332)
"Lipstick."

86TH ST. EAST, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Through April 24: "The Duchess and the Dirtwater Fox."
From April 25: "Stay Hungry."

R.K.O. 86TH ST. TWIN I, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
"Sparkle."

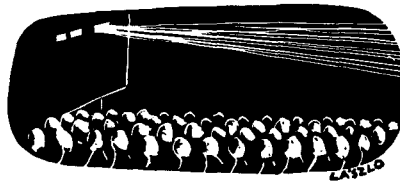
R.K.O. 86TH ST. TWIN 2, Lexington at 86th. (289-8932)
Through April 27: "Countdown at Kusini."
From April 28: To be announced.

WEST SIDE

WAVERLY, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
"Taxi Driver."

8TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
Through April 27: "Next Stop, Greenwich Village."

THE MOVIE HOUSES



S • M • T • W • T • F • S						
			21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

THE FILMS PLAYING THE REGULAR MOVIE HOUSES ARE DESCRIBED IN BRIEF IN THE SECTION BELOW

From April 28: "A Woman Under the Influence" and "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore."

GREENWICH, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest."

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Love and Anarchy" and "The Seduction of Mimi."
Theatre 2: "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex," "Where's Poppa?," and "Take the Money and Run."
Theatre 3: April 21: "Secret Agent" and "Sabotage." April 22: "The Lady Vanishes" and "Murder." April 23: "Foreign Correspondent" and "Young and Innocent." April 24: "Blackmail" and "The 39 Steps." April 25: "Sabotage" and "The Man Who Knew Too Much." April 26: "Young and Innocent" and "The Lady Vanishes." April 27: "The 39 Steps" and "Foreign Correspondent." April 28: "Secret Agent" and "The Lodger." April 29: "The Man Who Knew Too Much" and "Murder."
Theatre 4: "The Magic Flute."

GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (PL 7-2406)
"Bugs Bunny Superstar."

MUSIC HALL, 6th Ave. at 50th. (757-3100)
"Robin and Marian."

ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Moses."

FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (581-2323)
"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest."

PLAYBOY, 110 W. 57th. (JU 6-4448)
Through April 27: "Emmanuelle: The Joys of a Woman" (X-rated) and "WUSA."
From April 28: "The Man Who Would Be King" and "99 and 44/100% Dead."

LITTLE CARNEGIE, 146 W. 57th. (246-5123)
Through April 27: "Taxi Driver."
From April 28: "Taking Off."

PARIS, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
Through April 24: "Grey Gardens."
From April 25: "Bambina."

PARAMOUNT, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"The Bad News Bears."

CINEMA STUDIO, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Through April 22: "Blazing Saddles" and "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex."
From April 23: "I Will, I Will... For Now."

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through April 24: "The Crazies."
From April 25: To be announced.

EMBASSY 72ND ST., B'way at 72nd. (SC 4-6745)
"The Story of Adele H."

LOEWS 83RD TRIPLEX, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: Through April 22: "American Graffiti." From April 23: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Bugs Bunny Superstar."
Theatre 3: "Next Stop, Greenwich Village."

NEW YORKER, B'way at 88th. (TR 4-9189)
"Taxi Driver."

SYMPHONY, B'way at 95th. (AC 2-6600)
Through April 27: "Crime and Passion" and "Hennessy."
From April 28: To be announced.

THALIA, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)
"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest."

OLYMPIA, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Through April 27: "Jaws."
From April 28: "Hester Street" and "Marry Me! Marry Me!"

REVIVAL HOUSES

(These theatres show revivals exclusively, and for abbreviated runs. For reasons of space, or lack of it, only the films marked with a dagger are described in our "In Brief" section, further along.)

BLEECKER ST. CINEMA, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
April 21: "The Naked Night" (1953), in Swedish, directed by Ingmar Bergman, with Harriet Andersson and Ake Grönberg; and "The Magician" (1958), in Swedish, directed by Ingmar Bergman, with Ingrid Thulin and Max von Sydow.
April 22: "Funny Face" (1957), directed by Stanley Donen, with Audrey Hepburn, Fred Astaire, and Kay Thompson; and "Two for the Road" (1967), directed by Stanley Donen, with Audrey Hepburn and Albert Finney.
April 23: "La Strada" (1954), in Italian, directed by Federico Fellini, with Anthony Quinn, Richard Basehart, and Giulietta Masina; and "Zorba the Greek" (1964), directed by Michael Cacoyannis, with Anthony Quinn and Alan Bates.
April 24: "Gone with the Wind" (1939), directed by Victor Fleming, with Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable.
April 25: "Chloé in the Afternoon" (1972), in French, directed by Eric Rohmer, with Bernard Verley and Zouzou; and "Claire's Knee" (1970), in French, directed by Eric Rohmer, with Jean-Claude Brialy and Beatrice Romand.
April 26: "Nosferatu" (†) and "Jonathan." (†)
April 27: "Alfie" (†) and "Charlie Bubbles." (†)
April 28: "A Married Woman" (†) and "Masculine Feminine." (†)
April 29: "The Rain People" (†); and "Thieves Like Us" (1974), directed by Robert Altman, with Keith Carradine, Shelley Duvall, John Schuck, and Bert Remsen.
CARNEGIE HALL CINEMA, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)
April 21: "Throne of Blood" (1957) and "The Lower Depths" (1957), both films in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa, and with Toshiro Mifune.
April 22: "Lady in the Dark" (1944), directed by Mitchell Leisen, with Ginger Rogers, Ray Milland, Jon Hall, and Warner Baxter; and "Tom, Dick, and Harry" (1941), directed by Garson Kanin, with Ginger Rogers, George Murphy, Alan Marshal, and Burgess Meredith.
April 23: "The 400 Blows" (1959), in French, directed by François Truffaut, with Jean-Pierre Léaud; and "If..." (1969), directed by Lindsay Anderson, with Malcolm McDowell.
April 24: "The Virgin Spring" (1960) and "The Seventh Seal" (1956), both films in Swedish, directed by Ingmar Bergman, and with Max von Sydow.
April 25: "Modern Times" (1936), directed by, and with, Charlie Chaplin; and "Chaplin Revue." (†)
April 26: "Fists in the Pocket" (†) and "In the Name of the Father." (†)
April 27: "Scarlet Street" (†) and "Double Indemnity." (†)
April 28: "The Hidden Fortress" (†); and "The Bad Sleep Well" (1960), in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa, with Toshiro Mifune.
April 29: "Nosferatu" (†) and "The Last Laugh." (†)
ELGIN, 8th Ave. at 19th. (675-0935)
April 21: "Jericho" (1938), directed by Thornton Freeland, with Paul Robeson, Henry Wilcoxon, Wallace Ford, and John Laurie.
April 22-24: "She" (1935), directed by Irving Pichel and Lansing C. Holden, with Randolph Scott, Helen Mack, and Helen Gahagan Douglas; and "The Old Dark House" (1932), directed by James Whale, with Charles Laughton, Melvyn Douglas, Raymond Massey, Boris Karloff, and Gloria Stuart.
April 25-26: "Giant" (1956), directed by George Stevens, with Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson, James Dean, and Mercedes



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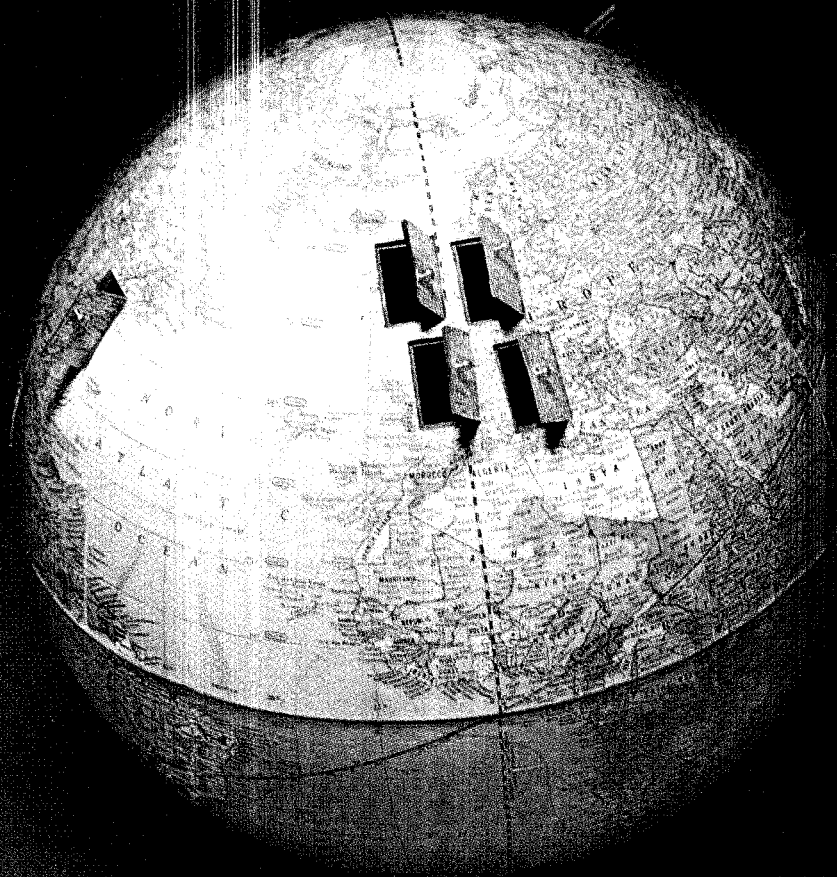
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McCambridge; and "East of Eden" (1955), directed by Elia Kazan, with James Dean and Julie Harris.
 April 27: "Hearts and Minds" (1975), directed by Peter Davis, a documentary film about United States involvement in Vietnam; and "Flying Leathernecks" (1951), directed by Nicholas Ray, with John Wayne, Robert Ryan, and Don Taylor.
 April 28: "Sanders of the River" (†)
 April 29: "Bang the Drum Slowly" (1973), directed by John Hancock, with Michael Moriarty and Robert De Niro; and "Drive, He Said." (†)
THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
 Through April 24: "Nothing Sacred" (1937), directed by William Wellman, with Carole Lombard, Fredric March, Walter Connolly, and Charles Winninger; and "My Man Godfrey" (1936), directed by Gregory La Cava, with Carole Lombard, William Powell, Mischa Auer, and Alice Brady.
 April 25-27: "Her Majesty Love" (†) and "Sunny." (†)
 From April 28: "Mad Love" (†) and "M." (†)

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W 53rd St. (956-7078)—April 22 at 2: "Earth" (1930), a Russian silent film, directed by Alexander

Dovzhenko; no English inter-titles...
 ¶ April 22 at 5:30: "The World Moves On" (1934), directed by John Ford, with Madeleine Carroll and Franchot Tone...
 ¶ April 22 at 8: "Camille 2000" (1969), directed by Radley Metzger, with Danièle Gaubert and Nino Castelnuovo; recommended for adults only...
 ¶ April 23 at 2: "The Life of Moses" (1909), directed by J. Stuart Blackton; Czech inter-titles only, a Czech print of the film being the only surviving one available...
 ¶ April 23 at 5:30: "Earth"...
 ¶ April 24 at 11:30: An anthology of the Italian cinema, Part 1, silent films; with an English narration...
 ¶ April 24 at 3: "The Life of Moses"...
 ¶ April 24 at 5:30: "Who's That Knocking at My Door?" (1968), directed by Martin Scorsese, with Zina Bethune and Harvey Keitel...
 ¶ April 25 at noon and 3: Two different programs of early animated films by Otto Messmer, including some of Felix the Cat...
 ¶ April 25 at 5:30: A program of eight short films...
 ¶ April 26 at noon: Otto Messmer program...
 ¶ April 26 at 2: An anthology of the Italian cinema, Part 2, sound films; with an English narration...
 ¶ April 26 at 5:30: "Not a Pretty Picture" (1975), directed by Martha Coolidge...
 ¶ April 27 at noon: Otto Messmer program...
 ¶ April 27 at 2: "The World Moves On"...
 ¶ April 29 at noon: "Zuiderzee" (1929) and "New Earth"

(1934), both Dutch films, directed by Joris Ives; both with Dutch narration and no English subtitles...
 ¶ April 29 at 4: Anthology of Italian cinema Part 1...
 ¶ April 29 at 7:45: Anthology of Italian cinema, Part 2. (A limited number of tickets are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing. Tickets for the evening performances are not available until a half hour before the showing.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—Through April 25: A program of eight Felix the Cat cartoons done by Otto Messmer between 1921 and 1928...
 ¶ Starting April 27: "Mouches Volantes," directed by Larry Gottheim. Showings at noon, 1:30, 3, and 4:30 (plus 6:15 and 8 on Tuesday evenings). Call desk (704-0630) for ticket information. Closed Mondays.

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES, 80 Wooster St. (226-0010)—Programs by Buñuel, Méliès, Dreyer, Eisenstein, Jacobs, Chomont, Vasulka, Frampton, Hanoun, and others. Showings April 21 at 7 and 8:30; April 22-23 at 7 and 9; April 24 at 2:30, 7, and 9; April 25 at 8; and April 27-29 at 7 and 9.

FILM FORUM, 15 Vandam St., three blocks south of Houston St., at Sixth Ave. (989-2994)—"Boesman and Lena" (1973), a South African film, directed by Ross Devenish. Showings Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
 THE DATE OF REVIEW IN THESE PAGES IS GIVEN FOR FILMS LESS THAN TWO YEARS OLD.

THE ADVENTURE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES' SMARTER BROTHER—Gene Wilder's talent is evident in the many nice leafy touches, but in his first attempt at a tripleheader (writer-director-star) he gets bogged down in an overelaborate production. With Madeline Kahn, Marty Feldman, Dom DeLuise, and Leo McKern. (Reviewed in our issue 12/22/75.) (St. Marks Cinema; through April 27.)

ALFIE (1966)—Michael Caine gives a beautifully self-mocking performance as a solemnly promiscuous working-class swinger who divides his attentions among Vivien Merchant, Jane Asher, Shelley Winters, and others. Directed by Lewis Gilbert, from Bill Naughton's play. Score by Sonny Rollins. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 27.)

ALICE DOESN'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE (1975)—Ellen Burstyn stars in this Martin Scorsese comedy, from an original script by Robert Getchell, about a thirty-five-year-old widow who sets out with her young son to make a new life. Full of funny malice and breakneck vitality, it's absorbing and intelligent even when the issues it raises get all fouled up. With Harvey Keitel, Kris Kristofferson, Valerie Curtin, Lelia Goldoni, Lane Bradbury, Diane Ladd, and, as the son, wire-drawn little Alfred Lutter, who has crack comedy timing. (1/13/75) (8th St. Playhouse; starting April 28.)

ALICE IN WONDERLAND (1951)—A cartoon version from Disney that dilutes the material to a pale variety of whimsy and adds shiny little tunes. Not popular with children at the time of its release; because of the mushroom episode and the many transformations, it is now considered a turn-on for heads. (Cinema I, and Cinema II.)

ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN—Alan J. Pakula's film of the famous book by Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward about the uncovering of the Watergate coverup. Woodward is played by Robert Redford, one of our best actors but perhaps too good-looking for a newsroom. Bernstein is played by Dustin Hoffman with edgy intelligence. The film is good on newspapers' nervous verve, though it has its share of clichés about the working press. A carefully observant film about the process of catechizing, the manner of political casuistry, and the courage of uncelebrated and endangered people. (4/12/76) (Loews Tower East.)

AMERICAN GRAFFITI (1973)—The second feature film by the young George Lucas, about the teen-age world of 1962 in small-town northern California. We again inhabit the post-McCarthy, pre-Vietnam-protest land of drive-ins, old cars dangerously raced, Elvis haircuts, ritual necking. We live through a long night and dawn with the kids, but the next day comes up, and decisions have to be made about taking planes East to college and hiding homesickness. Flashy photography, perhaps more film knowledge than the film can

use, but worth seeing. (Loews 83rd Triplex; through April 22.)

THE BAD NEWS BEARS—A story of a team of sort of mini-Mets, with Tatum O'Neal as a pitcher, and Walter Matthau as a coach who feeds his team Coke and franks and pours incessant slugs of Scotch into his cans of beer. (Sutton, and Paramount.)

BAMBINA—With Irene Papas, directed by Alberto Lattuada. In Italian. (Paris; starting April 25.)

BARRY LYNDON—Stanley Kubrick's stately tour of European high life in the mid-eighteenth century—a coffee-table movie, with Ryan O'Neal and Marisa Berenson. (12/20/75) (Gramercy; through April 27...
 ¶ St. Marks Cinema; starting April 28.)

BLACKMAIL (1929)—A London-set Hitchcock silent thriller that was in part reshot and in part dubbed to make it a sound film—and an unusually imaginative and innovative one. With its trick shots in the British Museum and a chase on the museum roof, the film seems almost German in its pictorial style, and the heroine is indeed played by the German actress Anny Ondra, who married Max Schmeling. (Her voice is dubbed.) Cyril Ritchard, who doesn't look very different now, plays the artist who tries to rape the heroine; with Sara Allgood, John Longden, and Donald Calthrop. Hitchcock turns up being pestered by a little boy while he tries to read a book. (Quad Cinema; April 24.)

BLAZING SADDLES (1974)—Mel Brooks's comedy of chaos, with a surfeit of chaos and a scarcity of comedy. The story is about a modern black hipster (Cleavon Little) who becomes sheriff in a Western town in the eighteen-sixties; Gene Wilder and Madeline Kahn manage to redeem some of the film, but most of the cast (including Brooks himself) mug and smirk and shout insults at each other. Brooks's celebrated spontaneous wit isn't in evidence: the old gags here never were very funny; re-hashed, they just seem desperate. (2/18/74) (Cinema Studio; through April 22.)

BUGS BUNNY SUPERSTAR—A collection of ten Warner Brothers Looney Tunes cartoons, with Bugs Bunny, Elmer Fudd, Tweety-Pie, and others. (Guild, and Loews 83rd Triplex...
 ¶ Cinema Village, and Eastside Cinema; through April 27.)

CHAPLIN REVUE—Mementos from the silent past: "A Dog's Life," "Shoulder Arms," and "The Pilgrim." The last two are excellent. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 25.)

CHARLIE BUBBLES (1968)—Albert Finney as a famous writer who feels alienated. The dreariness of his life, though deliberate and stylized, alienates the audience, too. There is talent in the movie, but a larger dose of irritation. With Liza Minnelli and Billie Whitelaw; Finney directed. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 27.)

COUNTDOWN AT KUSINI—With Ruby Dee, Ossie Davis, and Greg Morris; directed by Mr.

Davis. (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2; through April 27.)

THE CRAZIES (1973)—A science-fiction horror film, photographed in western Pennsylvania. With Lane Carroll, directed by George A. Romero. (Regency; through April 24.)

CRIME AND PASSION—A comedy-drama, with Omar Sharif, Karen Black, and Joseph Bottoms; directed by Ivan Passer. (Symphony; through April 27.)

DOUBLE INDEMNITY (1944)—Billy Wilder's cold, gripping, clever film from James Cain's story, with Barbara Stanwyck and Fred MacMurray and Edward G. Robinson. We are in the chill of a world of life insurance and of greedy people living lives of sophisticated violence in smart little eggbox apartments. Barbara Stanwyck is pure ice, perfectly cast. A freezing picture, very efficient. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 27.)

DRIVE, HE SAID (1971)—Jack Nicholson's début as a director. This film about schizophrenia in the soul of young America is well acted, but it skids into some very leaden symbolism about a crackup in the mind of a boy avoiding the draft; the screen suddenly swarms with lizards and mice and bugs that he has let loose in a biology lab, in the spirit of freeing fellow-prisoners. (Elgin; April 29.)

THE DUCHESS AND THE DIRTWATER FOX—George Segal, Goldie Hawn, directed by Melvin Frank in what is described as a bawdy comedy-Western. Self-congratulatory, as at an Academy Awards binge. (Trans-Lux East, and 86th St. East; through April 24.)

EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SEX (1972)—Woody Allen, who has the anesthetized face of a Jewish Buster Keaton combined with a sensible woman shopper's, wrote and directed this intermittently inspired take-off on Dr. David Reuben's waggish best-seller. (Quad Cinema...
 ¶ Cinema Studio; through April 22.)

FACE TO FACE—Ingmar Bergman's relentless chronicle of the edging toward breakdown of a woman psychiatrist (Liv Ullmann). Her skill lies in hauling others out of nightmares without falling prey to them herself. Why, then, does she take a near-fatal overdose of sleeping pills? Bergman makes it seem no enigma that this apparently reposeful woman is within reach of the long arm of blight. The film is a marvellously vivid and thoughtful—and, surprisingly, witty—record of an unhappy mind's oscillation between ease and agitation. In Swedish. (4/5/76) (Beekman.)

FAMILY PLOT—Hitchcock's fifty-third film, made in his seventy-seventh year, is perhaps his wittiest and most good-natured, full of sly jokes. Barbara Harris, never more fully used, contributes a very funny study in feminine hysteria—Hitchcock's favorite topic—as a pretty, permanently famished clairvoyant who nearly throttles her boyfriend (Bruce Dern) when their car's brake fluid has been nefariously interfered with. The villains are posh

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

jewel thieves—Karen Black and William Devane. Highly recommended, and not at all scary; just larky. (4/19/76) (Murray Hill, and Loews Orpheum.)

FANTASIA (1940)—Disney enlisted an odd assortment of collaborators (Stokowski and Stravinsky, among others), and the film—a grab bag of animated shorts—was publicized as if it were an artistic landmark. It failed commercially, and has been revived as a head film for Mickey Mouse heads. (Cinema I, and Cinema II.)

FISTS IN THE POCKET (1967)—This first film by Marco Bellocchio must surely be one of the most astonishing directorial debuts in the history of movies, yet it is hard to know how to react to it. The direction is exhilaratingly cool and assured, and the whole movie is charged with temperament, but the material is wild. It's about a bourgeois family of diseased monsters; epileptic fits multiply between bouts of matricide, fratricide, and incest. The material is so savage that the movie often seems intended to be funny, but *why* it was so intended isn't clear. It features the best strange-brother-and-sister act since "Les Enfants Terribles": Lou Castel, with his pug-dog manner, and Paola Pitagora, looking like a debauched gazelle. In Italian. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 26.)

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT (1940)—Hitchcock appears to have concocted this spy thriller out of all the breathtaking climaxes he'd been hoarding; there's the assassination with the gun concealed in a newsman's camera, the Dutch windmill going against the wind, and a tremendous finale aboard a transatlantic plane from London on the very day war is declared. The plot that links all this is barely functional, and the jaunty reporter-hero (Joel McCrea) is held down a bit when he has to attend to the ever-busy heroine (Lorraine Day), but the movie is intermittently first-rate, and the topnotch supporting cast includes George Sanders, Albert Basserman, Herbert Marshall, Edmund Gwenn, Martin Kosleck, Eduardo Cianelli, Barbara Pepper, and Robert Benchley, who also had a hand in the dialogue. (Quad Cinema; April 23 and 27.)

GREY GARDENS—The Maysles brothers film of Edith Bouvier Beale and her daughter, Edie, in their decaying East Hampton mansion. (Paris; through April 24.)

HENNESSY—A thriller of gripping harmlessness, directed by Don Sharp, about the plan of an Ulsterman named Hennessy (Rod Steiger) to blow up the Houses of Parliament at a State Opening. The Home Secretary (Peter Copley) takes the threat with deep-breathing seriousness: "The whole power structure of the nation will be there." So does the I.R.A., which is heavily emphasized as having nothing to do with the scheme. There is a lot of blandly ingenious cutting between the fictional story and the behavior of the Royal Family in a color newsreel of an actual State Opening. (8/4/75) (Symphony; through April 27.)

HER MAJESTY LOVE (1931)—Dopey William Dieterle musical, with Marilyn Miller in love with Ben Lyon in old Berlin. W. C. Fields suddenly helps immensely by appearing as Marilyn Miller's juggler parent. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 25-27.)

HESTER STREET—A modest comedy about the assimilation process among a group of Russian-Jewish immigrants living on the lower East Side in 1896. Independently made, this first feature by the writer-director Joan Micklin Silver begins lamely, but it wins one over. Carol Kane is lovely as the timid, pious, rejected wife of a sweatshop worker who has broken away from the Old World traditions she represents. Mel Howard plays Bernstein, the scholarly boarder who loves her. (11/24/75) (Cinema Village, Gramercy, Kips Bay, and Olympia; starting April 28.)

THE HIDDEN FORTRESS (1958)—The setting is the Japanese civil wars of the sixteenth century, but Kurosawa appears to be influenced by John Ford in this stirring fairy-tale Western, with its fighting and clowning and horsemen escaping across the border. There's a treasure in gold, a princess in anachronistic-looking shorts, and Toshiro Mifune as a heroic general. In Japanese. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 28.)

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER (1971)—A gaudy, splintered piece of work in which a satanically clever boy at a Jesuit school outwits the

priests at their own game of power-by-diabolism when he asks for more science and less Dark Ages obscurantism, though his subsequent cruelty actually drags science back to the day of the thumbscrew. A beautiful-looking, muddleheaded film, directed by Marco Bellocchio. In Italian. (4/8/74) (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 26.)

I WILL, I WILL... FOR NOW—The worst, Combines the most smirkingly forced elements of fifties mistaken-identity farces with a mushy soft-core version of the sex-manual pornos. Elliott Gould is fairly thoroughly trashed, but Diane Keaton manages to save face despite what's going on around her. Norman Panama directed. (3/1/76) (Cinema Studio; starting April 23.)

JAWS—Don't bite. (Olympia; through April 27.)

JONATHAN (1973)—Intellectual vampire picture. Not for true fanciers of bloodsucking. Directed by Hans Geissendörfer. In German. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 26.)

THE LADY VANISHES (1938)—Alfred Hitchcock's murder mystery about a charming old lady who boards a train and disappears on it has some of the best examples of his comedy and his pleasurable perversity. In movie history, it is a quintessential suspense thriller. The hero is Michael Redgrave (making his film debut); the heroine is Margaret Lockwood; the lady is the memorable Dame May Whitty. With Paul Lukas and Cecil Parker. (Quad Cinema; April 22 and 26.)

THE LAST LAUGH (1924)—Emil Jannings as the man whose self-esteem and position in society depend on his uniform, in F. W. Murnau's masterpiece of design and cinematography. A breathtaking achievement in silent-film technique. With added musical track. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 29.)

LIES MY FATHER TOLD ME—Set in Montreal in the twenties, about a seven-year-old Jewish boy, his grandfather, and his father. Directed by Jan Kadar. (Columbia II... 72nd Street East; starting April 28.)

LIPSTICK—Smeared. With Margaux Hemingway and Chris Sarandon, directed by Lamont Johnson. (Loews Ciné.)

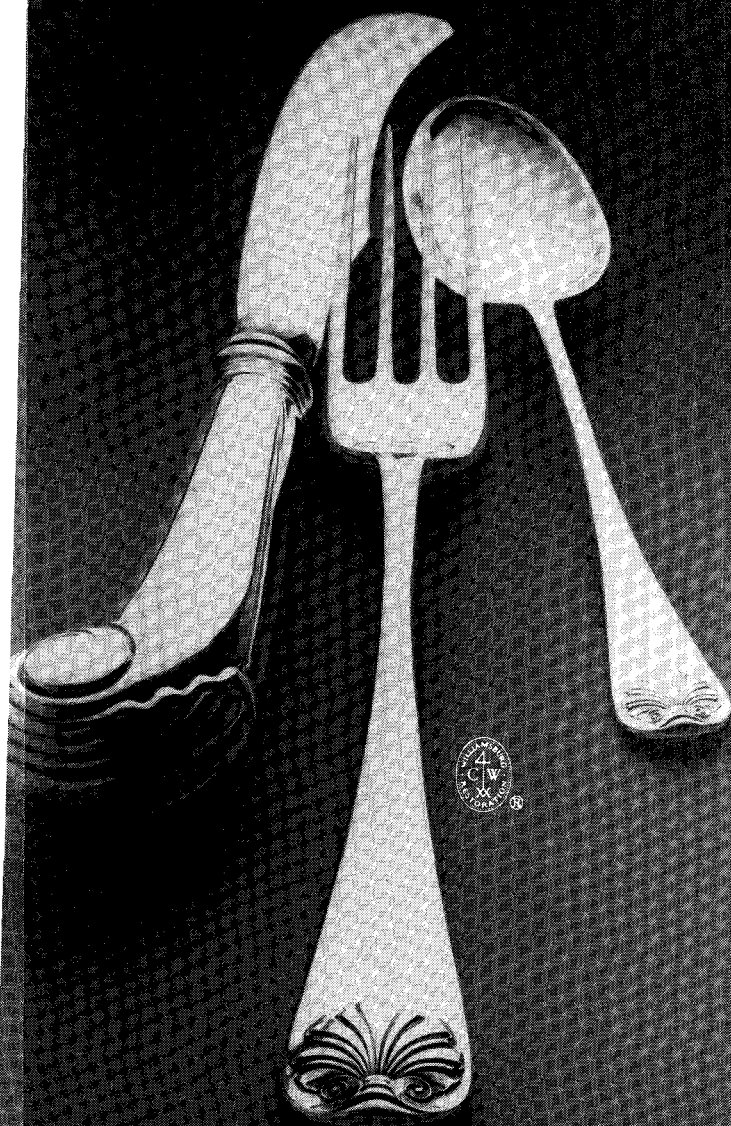
THE LODGER (1926)—An English silent film, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, with Ivor Novello. (Quad Cinema; April 28.)

LOVE AND ANARCHY (1973)—Lina Wertmüller's large, epic film is set mostly in a thirties brothel; there, a young country bumpkin (Giancarlo Giannini, looking like a freckled young chicken), who intends to assassinate Mussolini, falls in love and botches his plans. The movie is uneven; it often seems like a silent film, and sometimes it is extravagant and operatic. But when Wertmüller concentrates on the whores' faces and attitudes it can be very beautiful. In Italian. (Quad Cinema.)

M (1932)—Fritz Lang's first sound film has visual excitement, pace, brilliance of surface, and feeling for detail. Above all, it has, caught in a manhunt, a small, fat man, sweating in his uncomfortable clothes—the sexual psychopath who murders little girls—interpreted by Peter Lorre with a spark of genius. It is Lorre's triumph that he makes us understand the terrified, suffering human being who murders. The film is based on the case of the Düsseldorf murderer; the police, in trying to track him down, disturbed the normal criminal activities of the city, and the underworld organized to find him, so that crime could go on as usual. Lang turns the movie into a melodramatic thriller by centering on this ironic chase; the film is similar to "The Threepenny Opera" in its satirical use of beggars and criminals. In German. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; starting April 28.)

MAD LOVE (1935)—Karl Freund, the famous UFA cinematographer, directed this version of the horror story "The Hands of Orlac" for M-G-M, starring Peter Lorre, with Gregg Toland (who was later to shoot "Citizen Kane") in the camera crew. Freund's direction is disappointingly static, but the film is of considerable visual and historical interest. Peter Lorre's mad doctor might almost be an early sketch for Orson Welles' performance as the elderly Kane; the gothic sets of the two pictures have many similarities, and a white cockatoo turns up in both of them. With Frances Drake, Colin Clive, Ted Healy, Isabel Jewell, and Harold Huber. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; starting April 28.)

THE MAGIC FLUTE—Ingmar Bergman said that making this film "was the best time of my life; you can't imagine what it is like to have



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MAHLER—With Robert Powell in the title role, directed by Ken Russell. (Reviewed in this issue.) (D. W. Griffith.)

THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH (1935)—In 1955, Hitchcock remade in color (same title) this thriller about a kidnapping and an attempted political assassination. The later version starred James Stewart and Doris Day; this first version features Leslie Banks, Edna Best, Pierre Fresnay, and Peter Lorre (it was Lorre's debut in English-language films), and it has Hitchcock's ingenuity and flair and sneaky wit. The best scenes—especially an assassination attempt at Royal Albert Hall—are stunning, but Hitchcock seems sloppily unconcerned about the unconvincing material in between the tricks and jokes—a fault that persisted in the later, stodgier version. Nova Pilbeam plays the kidnapped child. (Quad Cinema; April 25 and 29.)

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING—John Huston's exhilaratingly farfetched adventure fantasy, starring Sean Connery and Michael Caine as the Kipling heroes who set out to conquer a barbarous land. A beautifully crafted ironic fable about imperialism. (1/5/76) (Playboy; starting April 28.)

A MARRIED WOMAN (1965)—Jean-Luc Godard's peculiarly abstract treatment of a young married woman (Macha Meril), her dissatisfactions, her patterns as a consumer, and her infidelities. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 28.)

MARRY ME! MARRY ME! (1969)—Claude Berri's sweet-natured film about pressures on a French boy to get married into a family that is a cut above him—a tribe of Belgian diamond merchants. Made with great care and sense of detail. In French. (Olympia; starting April 28.)

MASCULINE FEMININE (1965)—Godard's graceful, intuitive examination of the courtship rites of "the children of Marx and Coca-Cola." With Jean-Pierre Léaud as a young radical in love with Chantal Goya, a *yé-yé* singer. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 28.)

MEAN STREETS (1973)—A true original, and a triumph of personal filmmaking. What Martin Scorsese has done with the experience of growing up in New York's Little Italy has a thicker-textured rot than we have ever had in an American movie, and a ripper sense of evil. With Harvey Keitel as Charlie and Robert De Niro as Johnny Boy. (34th St. East, and Baronet; starting April 22.)

MERRY GO ROUND—With Senta Berger and Sydney Rome, directed by Otto Shenck. A German film, dubbed in English. (Eastside Cinema; starting April 28.)

MOSES—With Burt Lancaster in the title role. Also with Anthony Quayle, Ingrid Thulin, and Irene Papas. Directed by Gianfranco de Bosio. (Ziegfeld.)

MURDER (1930)—A rarely seen, handsomely designed early Hitchcock whodunit set among theatre people; not in the class of his mid-thirties work, but with inventive tricks. Herbert Marshall (in his first talking picture) is a fancy big-time actor serving on a jury, convinced of the innocence of the young actress (Norah Baring) who is on trial for murder, he tries to solve the case in order to save her life. There are some snobbish bits that appear to ridicule the "lower orders"—apparently, these are the unfortunate results of attempts at improvisation. Hitchcock experimented with a stream-of-consciousness monologue, and there's a tricky sequence in which Marshall listens to "Tristan" on the radio while he shaves. The actual murderer turns out to be a transvestite—daring at the time, but all too familiar a scapegoat now. (Quad Cinema; April 22 and 29.)

NEXT STOP, GREENWICH VILLAGE—Paul Mazursky's wonderful autobiographical lyric satire about a young comedian's life in the Village in the early fifties. With a tip-top cast headed by Lenny Baker, Ellen Greene, Christopher Walken, and Antonio Fargas, and with Shelley Winters giving her first full-scale performance that works on all levels. (2/2/76) (Loews 83rd Triplex... Kips Bay, 72nd Street East, and 8th St. Playhouse; through April 27.)

99 AND 44/100% DEAD (1974)—Gang warfare. With Richard Harris and Chuck Connors as hired killers. Directed by John Frankenheimer. (Playboy; starting April 28.)

NOSFERATU (1922)—F. W. Murnau's famous vampire movie—part of everyone's movie-going subconscious of bite tactics and of disposal methods for the prone-to-be-bitten. Wonderfully photographed: Murnau gave distinction to dross. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 26... Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 29.)

ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST—Smashingly effective version of Ken Kesey's novel about a rebel outcast (Jack Nicholson) who is locked in a hospital for the insane. Louise Fletcher is Nurse Ratched, and Will Sampson is Chief Bromo. Miloš Forman's intelligent, tentative direction lacks the excitement of movie art, but the story and the acting make the film emotionally powerful. (12/1/75) (Trans-Lux 85th St., Greenwich, Festival, and Thalia.)

THE RAIN PEOPLE (1969)—There's a prodigious amount of talent in Francis Ford Coppola's unusual, little-seen film, but it's a ponderously self-conscious effort; the author-director applies his film craftsmanship with undue solemnity to material that suggests a gifted college student's imitation of early Tennessee Williams. The result is academic, and never believable. Shirley Knight is atrociously mannered as a pregnant woman who leaves home and picks up a brain-damaged hitchhiker (James Caan). With Robert Duvall as a motorcycle cop. (Bleecker St. Cinema; April 29.)

THE RIVER NIGER—With Cicely Tyson, James Earl Jones, Lou Gossett, Glynn Turman and Jonelle Allen; directed by Krishniah Shah. (Fine Arts, and U.A. East.)

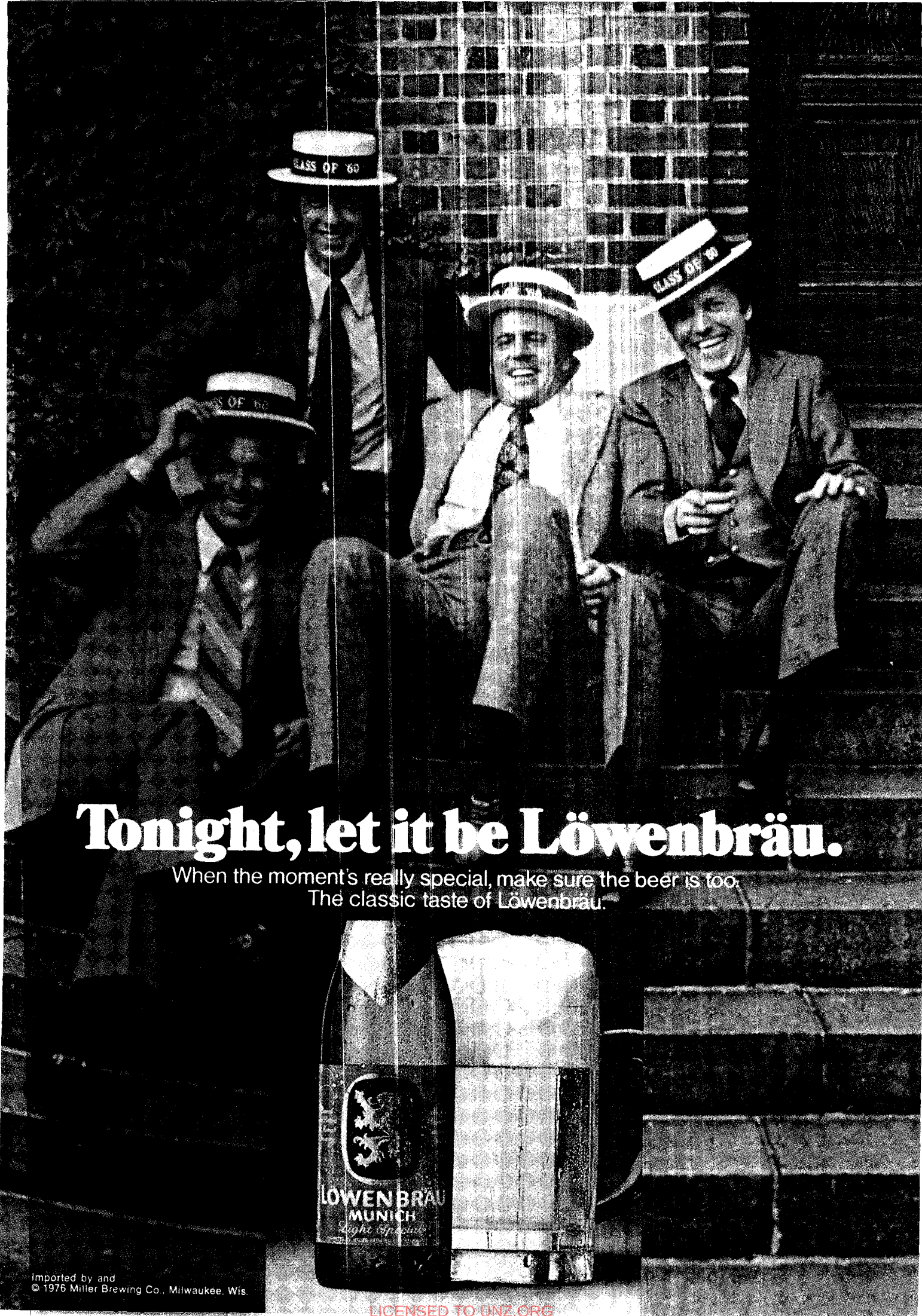
ROBIN AND MARIAN—Sean Connery and Audrey Hepburn are wittily matched, and their dark-brown eyes are full of life, but the picture's revisionist approach to legends results in a series of trivializing attitudes and whimsical poses. The line between tragic horror and joking make-believe has got smudged; the film is so sententious that it's difficult to gauge when to laugh and when to be appalled. Richard Lester directed from James Goldman's script; with Robert Shaw, Nicol Williamson, and Richard Harris. (3/22/76) (Music Hall.)

SABOTAGE (1936; called "The Woman Alone" in the United States)—Hitchcock thinks that he erred in this one—and that this explains why the picture wasn't a hit. But he's wrong: this adaptation of a Joseph Conrad spy novel may be just about the best of his English thrillers, and if the public didn't respond it wasn't his fault. Sylvia Sydney and Oscar Homolka are a married pair, the Verlocces, who manage a small movie house; Desmond Tester plays Mrs. Verlocc's younger brother, who, unknowingly, carries a bomb for her husband. There's a breathtaking sequence when Mrs. Verlocc, who has just learned of her brother's death, watches the cartoon "Who Killed Cock Robin?" With John Loder as a police detective, Sara Allgood, Martita Hunt, Peter Bull, and Torin Thatcher. (Quad Cinema; April 21 and 25.)

THE SAILOR WHO FELL FROM GRACE WITH THE SEA—With Sarah Miles and Kris Kristofferson, directed by Lewis John Carlino. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Coronet.)

SANDERS OF THE RIVER (1935)—One of those all-for-the-glory-of-the-British-Empire specials. Paul Robeson plays Bosambo, a trustworthy Congo chieftain, so loyal to the British that he helps the colonial officials crush a native revolt. Robeson, who had apparently expected this English film—an Alexander Korda production, directed by Zoltan Korda—to have a very different point of view, fought its release. However, despite the junkiness of the Edgar Wallace story on which it is based, and despite the flagrant racism of the noble-savage conception, Robeson himself has a nobility that transcends the picture's terms. He's magnificently stirring in his African bangles, especially when his chants roll out over the waters. Bosambo and his similar role in "King Solomon's Mines" were among his most popular performances. With the elegant Nina Mae McKinney, and Leslie Banks. (Elgin; April 28.)

SCARLET STREET (1946)—Fritz Lang directed this American version of Renoir's "La Chienne;" in the American setting it's a sordid, low-life melodrama about illicit love, and it never takes root—it's not one of Lang's best American movies. (It was originally banned in New York State—that is, denied a license—as "immoral, indecent, corrupt, and tending to incite crime," a judgment that seemed off

A black and white photograph of four men in suits and ties, each wearing a straw boater hat with a band that reads "CLASS OF '60". They are sitting on stone steps in front of a brick wall. The man on the far left is adjusting his hat. The man in the center is holding a jacket. The man on the far right is smiling and holding a glass. A large, condensation-covered bottle of Löwenbräu Munich Light Special is in the foreground.

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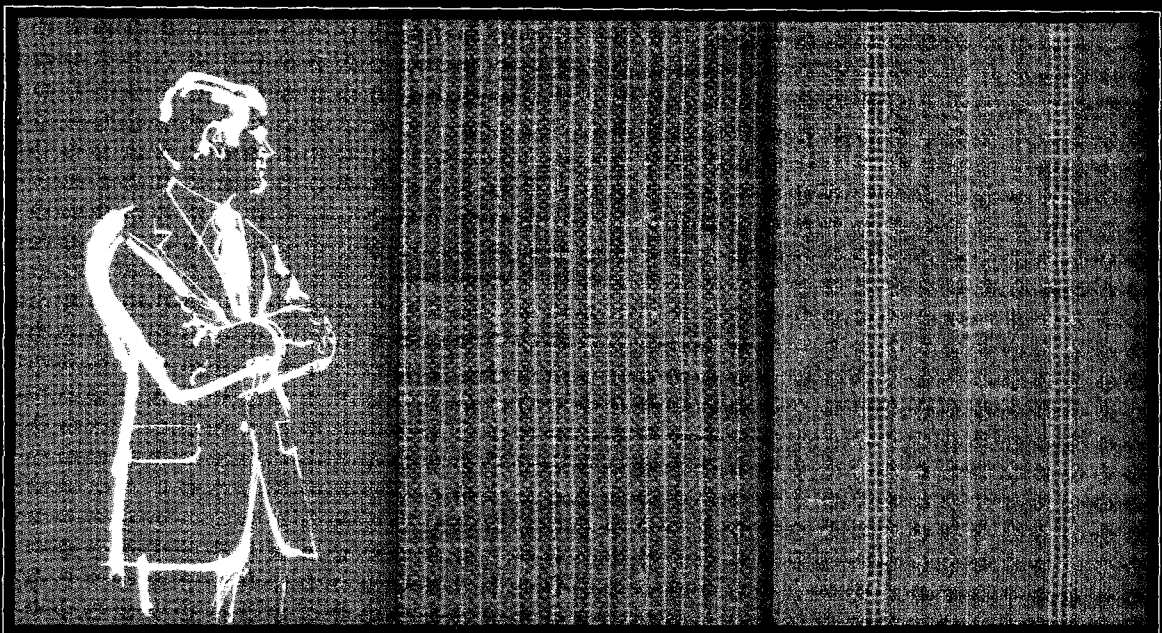
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

the wall even then.) Edward G. Robinson is a frustrated, gray-haired cashier married to a nagging widow (Rosalind Ivan); his only pleasure is in painting on Sundays. He falls for a tart (Joan Bennett) and sets her up in a Greenwich Village apartment, on stolen money. But the tart is in love with a lout (Dan Duryea), who beats her. The script, by Dudley Nichols, is heavy-handed, and Lang's emphatic style pounds the ironies and the murder-plot devices home. (Robinson kills the girl and Duryea is electrocuted for the crime.) Robinson's paintings are actually by John Decker. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; April 27.)

SECRET AGENT (1936)—Not altogether successful Hitchcock version of Somerset Maugham's spy thriller, "Ashenden," but it has a bright, quick, fresh touch, and it's fascinating partly because the two male leads, John Gielgud and Peter Lorre, are so ill used. Gielgud looks like a tailor's dummy for Leslie Howard, and Lorre plays a cheerful little killer who speaks in a Mexican dialect and wears a single earring. With Madeleine Carroll and Robert Young. (Quad Cinema; April 21 and 28.)

THE SEDUCTION OF MIMI (1972)—Written and directed by Lina Wertmüller. A farce, set in Italy and Sicily, about a sexual round robin, with the Mafia intervening. The hero is dead serious, above a subterranean freneticism, about his cold wife in Sicily and his Cranach-faced mistress in Turin and Catania. His wife vengefully gets pregnant by a tax officer; the hero makes love back to the tax officer's mountainous wife, who already has five children before this sixth one by him. The Mafia plants a murder on him, and he emerges from a jail sentence to find even his mistress and their beloved growing son disappearing into the distance. In Italian. (6/24/74) (Quad Cinema.)

SEVEN BEAUTIES—Lina Wertmüller's Everyman jamboree, full of garbled ideas, cruelty, moist wistfulness, pious moralizing, and appeals to coarse prejudices. With Giancarlo Giannini. In Italian. (2/16/76) (Plaza.)

SPARKLE—A musical drama, with Philip M. Thomas, Irene Cara, and Lonette McKee. Directed by Sam O'Steen, with music by Curtis Mayfield. (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 1.)

STAY HUNGRY—With Jeff Bridges and Sally Field, directed by Bob Rafelson. (Trans-Lux East, and 86th St. East; starting April 25.)

THE STORY OF ADELE H.—François Truffaut's finest film since "Jules and Jim," and his most passionate work. The film is damnably intelligent—almost frighteningly so, like some passages in Russian novels which strip the characters bare. And it's deeply, disharmoniously funny—which Truffaut has never been before. The story, about romantic love fulfilled by self-destruction, is based on the journals of Adele, the daughter of Victor Hugo; she's played by the prodigious young actress Isabelle Adjani. The visual consistency attained by the cinematographer, Nestor Almendros, enables Truffaut to achieve a new concentration on character. In French. (10/27/75) (Art, and Embassy 72nd St.)

SUNNY (1930)—Marilyn Miller in an adaptation of her 1925 Broadway musical success; the movie retains some of the original songs by Otto Harbach, Oscar Hammerstein II, and Jerome Kern. She plays an English circus performer who becomes a stowaway on a ship going to America. Miss Miller's fabled adorableness escapes the camera, and the picture is mainly of historical interest. With Lawrence Gray as the man she loves, and O. P. Heggie as her father; directed by William A. Seiter. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 25-27.)

TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN (1969)—Woody Allen as a sweetly incompetent gangster with genteel manners and an inability to write holdup notes that anyone can read. (Quad Cinema.)

TAKING OFF (1971)—Milos Forman, the Czech director of "Loves of a Blonde" and "The Fireman's Ball," working for the first time in America. His subject is the generation gap, but he sees it in his own way; this is a very funny film, flying in the face of cant journalistic opinions, and gently finding that both sides in the generation war are old-fashioned, decorous, and intent on smallish endeavors. (Little Carnegie; starting April 28.)

TAXI DRIVER—Robert De Niro stars in Martin Scorsese's feverish, horrifyingly funny movie about a lonely New York cabdriver. Be prepared; it's extraordinarily powerful. Paul Schrader wrote the script; with Harvey

Keitel, Cybill Shepherd, Jodie Foster, Peter Boyle, and Albert Brooks. (2/9/76) (Waverly, and New Yorker. . . .) Columbia I. Evening performances only. . . . Little Carnegie; through April 27.)

THE 39 STEPS (1935)—Hitchcock's suave, amusing spy melodrama, directed with so sure a touch that the suspense is charged with wit. Robert Donat and Madeleine Carroll are the pair handcuffed together until hate turns to love, Peggy Ashcroft and John Laurie are the couple joined together by marriage chains, and the villain is Godfrey Tearle, looking astonishingly like F.D.R. From the John Buchan novel. (Quad Cinema; April 24 and 27.)

VERILITY—A comedy, with Turi Ferro, directed by Paolo Cavara. In Italian. (68th St. Playhouse.)

W. C. FIELDS AND ME—Arthur Hiller's poor and humorless film, based on Carlotta Monti's biography of the same name, written with Cy Rice. She lived with the dyspeptic, mumbling, brine-pickled Fields for fourteen years, but the film is such a genteel libel of the man we know from his films that it is best approached with a pair of tongs. Rod Steiger can be a good actor, but not in the part of this Senecan and grandiloquent comic—and not saddled with this immobilizing makeup, which gives him a thin ration of yellowed fake straw for hair, a mouth twisted as if Fields had spent his working life recovering from a stroke, and a nose that looks like a horse's badly darned feed bag. (4/12/76) (34th St. East, and Baronet; April 21.)

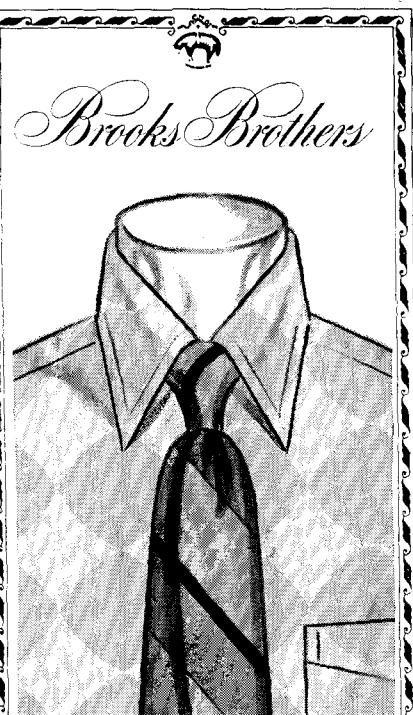
WHERE'S POPPA? (1970)—This Carl Reiner comedy about a lawyer (George Segal) who can't get loose from his mother (Ruth Gordon) doesn't completely work—maybe because the mother has been made into a senile psychopath instead of a sly, possessive witch, and so the satirical point gets confused. But it has so much energy that it's intermittently very funny, and Reiner has directed some graceful scenes between Segal and the charming Trish Van Devere. (Quad Cinema.)

A WOMAN UNDER THE INFLUENCE (1974)—The writer-director John Cassavetes is under the influence of R. D. Laing, and he presents an illustration of Laing's scapegoat theory of schizophrenia, with Gena Rowlands as the helpless victim of a bullying husband (Peter Falk) and a repressive society. Cassavetes swathes the Laingian romanticism in wet blankets; the scenes are often unshaped, and so rudderless that the meanings don't emerge. Rowlands externalizes schizophrenic dissolution; she fragments before our eyes. But her prodigious performance is enough for half a dozen tours de force—it's exhausting. Nothing she does is memorable, because she does so much. (12/9/74) (8th St. Playhouse; starting April 28.)

WUSA (1970)—A baroque, hysterical movie about a right-wing radio station in New Orleans; the picture is so overwritten, and Stuart Rosenberg directed it so exhibitionistically, that Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, Tony Perkins, and Laurence Harvey sink without much trace. (Playboy; through April 27.)

W. W. AND THE DIXIE DANCEKINGS—With Burt Reynolds and Conny Van Dyke, directed by John Avildsen. (St. Marks Cinema; through April 27.)

YOUNG AND INNOCENT (1937; known as "The Girl Was Young" in the United States)—Hitchcock reworks "The 39 Steps," this time using a very young hero and heroine. Once again, the hero (now Derrick de Marney) is accused of a murder he didn't commit; he tries to track down the real killer while the police track him. The bewildered teen-age girl (Nova Pilbeam) who tries to help him is too earnest a conception to be very amusing; the film is pretty fair Hitchcock, though not as sexy or as witty as "The 39 Steps." The bravura sequences include the hero crashing a children's party and a nifty sinister joke at the climax: The heroine knows only one thing about the villain—that his eyes twitch. She goes to a dance at a big hotel, and we see the blackface band; the drummer's eyes fill the screen—and twitch. Hitchcock takes the joke even further; as the drummer sees the police enter, he gets nervous, and his rhythm goes so crazily off that the people have to stop dancing. With Basil Radford, Percy Marmont, and Mary Clare. Hitchcock turns up, looking very young, as a press photographer, holding a tiny camera in front of him, like a talisman. (Quad Cinema; April 23 and 26.)



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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

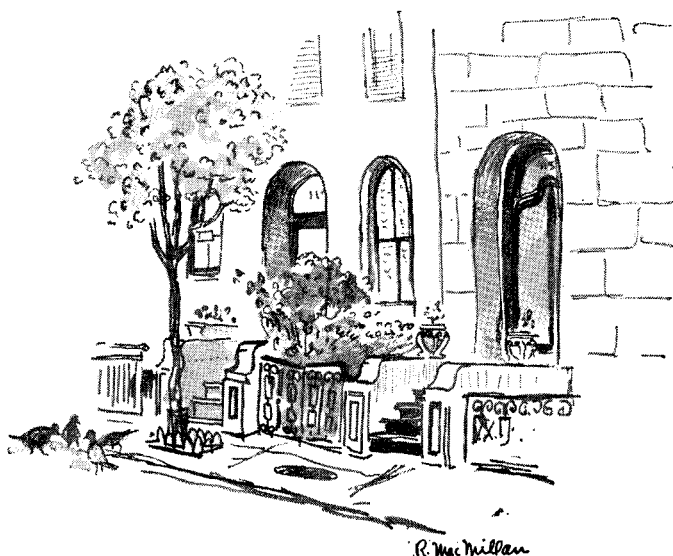
IN the aftermath of the Constitutional crisis of the Nixon years, few things have been more surprising than the tendency not merely to ignore the kinds of abuse that brought the crisis about but to institutionalize them and ratify them in law. For example, a bill is now under consideration in Congress which would make it a crime for anyone in government to give "properly classified" information to any "unauthorized person" outside government. The solution that this bill offers to the problem of abuses of governmental power is to make sure that no one will ever find out about them. If it should be passed, it would be the broadest legislation to guarantee government secrecy in the country's history. The President has proposed a similar law dealing with intelligence secrets. When he was asked how, with this law in effect, abuses would be uncovered, he answered simply that in the future there weren't going to be any abuses. Meanwhile, Attorney General Edward H. Levi has issued "guidelines" for the F.B.I. which would permit it to investigate members of groups whose actions "will" break federal law and have the result of "substantially impairing—for the purpose of influencing U.S. government policies or decisions—the functioning of the government of the United States." Since it can be imagined that anybody one day "will" break the law, and since all political opposition can be seen as "influencing" one policy or another—in fact, opposition can thwart a policy altogether—these guidelines would seem to permit any investigation whatever.

The sharp reversal of attitude toward government secrecy and secret-police power which is embodied in these new proposals follows a broad pattern of public response to matters touching upon the conflict between national security and the law. In this pattern, the advocates of traditional Constitutional principle win cases but at the same time lose ground in the law. It first emerged, perhaps, in the Pentagon Papers case, in which the side favoring strong First Amendment rights won the right to publish the Papers but in winning it left on the books the first precedent in American history for the government's imposing "prior restraint"—which is to say censorship—of newspapers. The pattern appeared again in the legal battle over the release of President Nixon's tapes, in which the President was forced in a unanimous Supreme Court decision to yield up the tapes but in which the concept of "executive privilege" gained a foothold in the law. In that decision, the justices spoke of a "presumptive privilege," and said that it was "fundamental to the operation of government and inextricably rooted in the separation of powers under the Constitution."

"Presumptive" was the right word: the privilege is not mentioned either in the Constitution or in any law. A few months ago, President Ford invoked this still cloudy but now legally grounded privilege in refusing to supply a House committee with certain information that it had asked for. A string of legal victories was leaving behind it a trail of adverse precedent.

A comparable result was achieved in Congress's main attempt in recent years to restrict the power of the President—the War Powers Act, of 1973. The act places the President under the obligation to seek Congressional approval within sixty days for any warfare he has launched. Seen in one way, this requirement looks like a restriction on Presidential power; but, seen in another way, it looks like an extra grant of power, since the Constitution fails to formally allow the President any war-making in the absence of Congressional approval. In other words, the net effect of the act was to formally expand the President's war-making power. Of course, the whole question of the war-making power is rendered nearly meaningless by the fact that the President can blow up the whole world in a minute

without asking anyone's approval: the letter of the present law would require the President to consult with Congress on his war policy within sixty days after the end of the world. It is, in fact, this brute reality—the staggering de-facto power of the President in our time—that underlies the entire conflict between national security, on the one hand, and the rights and balanced powers of the Constitution, on the other. Justice Potter Stewart, who favored permitting publication of the Pentagon Papers, acknowl-





Samuel Johnson

edged as much, in a tone of almost weary resignation, in his concurring opinion on the case. "In the governmental structure created by our Constitution, the executive is endowed with enormous power in the two related areas of national defense and international relations," he wrote. "This power, largely unchecked by the legislative and judicial branches, has been pressed to the very hilt since the advent of the nuclear-missile age. For better or for worse, the simple fact is that a President of the United States possesses vastly greater Constitutional independence in these two vital areas of power than does, say, a prime minister of a country with a parliamentary form of government." Justice Stewart went on to say that "the responsibility must be where the power is" and that "the executive must have the largely unshared duty to determine and preserve the degree of internal security necessary to exercise that power successfully." He hoped, however, that this nearly omnipotent, unchecked executive branch would, of its own volition, decide that "a very first principle of that wisdom would be an insistence upon avoiding secrecy for its own sake." In our day, it is thoughts like these that hold sway over the minds of men in government whenever they address themselves to the role of national security in the law, no matter what crisis the nation may have just been through in the real world.

It appears that, at a level deeper

than any mere events—even if the events include the resignation of a President—an all but irresistible compulsion flowing from the demands of national security has tended over the years to constrict liberty. Following the Second World War, the clandestine abuses of the executive branch existed for many years in nearly perfect secrecy, outside public debate and outside the law. The national-security system in those years did not so much abrogate the Constitutional system as grow up alongside it, so that while the Constitution was not cast aside, it was not applied, either. Today, for the first time, the full scope of the executive's abuses has been made known, and the nation is squarely faced with the question of whether or not it wants them to continue. The national-security system, deprived of its refuge outside the law, is now seeking a place for itself within the law—or, at least, in a space where the law has agreed that the law shall not apply. It is to provide this space that judges and legislators now busy themselves writing what amounts to a series of footnotes to the Constitution—footnotes that tend to cancel its main provisions. And this particular moment in the story of national security and the law is important not only because of what is being done now but because of what has gone before. The changes being made now are on a far smaller scale than those that threatened during the Constitutional crisis of the Nixon period, but they acquire heightened meaning because they

come after the unmistakable warning afforded by that crisis of where the path we are now following leads. No country has ever received clearer warning that its freedom was in danger without actually losing that freedom than the United States received in the last years of Nixon's Presidency. But today it seems that the lessons of that time have been stood on their head. The nation's response to the attempted takeover of the nation by the executive branch is to increase the power of the executive branch; its response to being deceived on an unprecedented scale is to increase government secrecy; and its response to abuses of secret-police power is to issue to the secret police a license for even wider action. More profound, almost, than the question of where the country is now heading, therefore, is the question of whether any possible experience is left that can serve as a warning, or whether the country is simply immune to experience. Now that we have shown ourselves capable of forgetting so much, it becomes hard to imagine what will turn us back.

Benefactors

THE old curmudgeon has been talking with a couple of "urbane environmentalists," as he calls them: Stuart Levin, president of HIFNY, which is an acronym for the Hospitality Industry Foundation of New York City, Inc.; and Peter Diamand, director of the Edinburgh Festival, which is *not* known as EFT. Here is his report:

Stuart Levin—he's a restaurateur who for years has been enhancing the environment of the inner man—has a new place, the Top of the Park, at the summit of the Gulf & Western Building, on Columbus Circle. Gulf & Western is a conglomerate that has swallowed up so many corporations I like to think of it as Engulf & Western. But back to Stuart Levin. I talked with him and Ambassador Angier Biddle Duke, the city's Commissioner of Civic Affairs and Public Events, during a luncheon at the Top whose rationale was the announcement of a project dreamed up by Mr. Levin to enhance the environment of the outdoor man. It's called "A Taste of the Big Apple." Big Apple—that was originally the name of a dance popular just after the repeal of Prohibition which was vaguely a forerunner of the Twist. Of course, "twist" was originally, among other things, slang for a young girl. Anyway, Levin's project is to array miniature

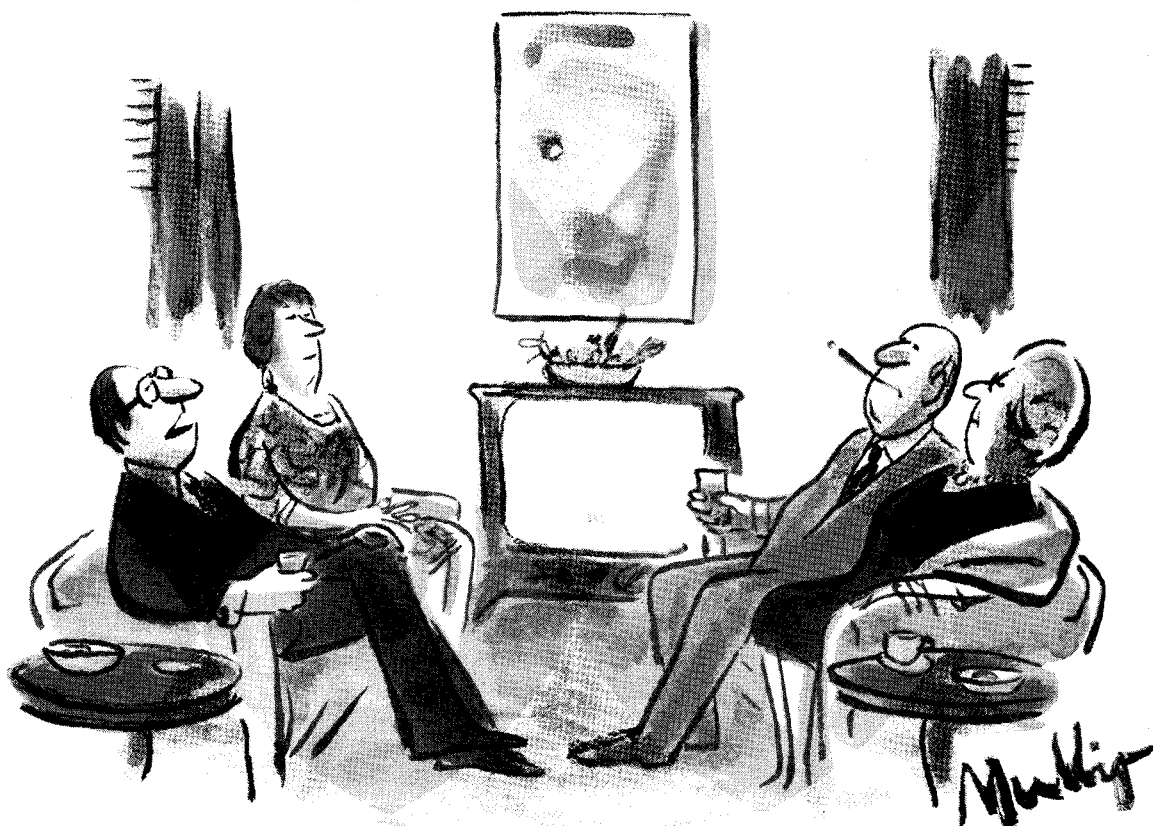
open-air versions of a hundred New York restaurants side by side along the Central Park Mall on Saturday, May 22nd (rain check for Sunday). These mini-restaurants will serve mini-portions of their specialties, the idea being that, since this butterfly has a life of but one day, determined gourmets will be able to sample at lunch and dinner the output of perhaps nine or ten of these establishments. Levin's Top will be one of the restaurants, along with Gallagher's, Gage & Tollner, Sweets, Sardi's, "21," Nedick's, Nathan's Famous, and a lot more. The last great panoply of restaurants in New York in my memory was at the World's Fair of 1939—the handiwork of one of Ambassador Duke's predecessors, Grover Whalen. That World's Fair was of lasting benefit to cuisine in New York City, thanks—ironically—to the outbreak of the Second World War. For one thing, some of the staff of the Italian pavilion decided not to go back to Italy. Arturo, the maître d' on one of the Italian Line ships, had been plucked from there by his government and installed in the same capacity at the pavilion. Considerably later, he bobbed up at the old Blue Angel, cheerfully greeting a surprised set of customers who had known him in another world. Some other members of the staff were similarly transmogrified. The Swedes at the Fair, who couldn't get home through the war zone, despite their neutrality, reëmerged as the Three Crowns restaurant, in the East Fifties. The great Henri Soulé, who ran the French restaurant at the Fair, stayed over and founded the Pavillon. And so it went.

At the luncheon, Stuart Levin took me to one of the north windows at the Top of the Park, from which the Mall seemed as though it were almost underfoot. Even without the customary spring rain, the Park had never looked better. Only one thing was missing. What was missing was the green-and-white palace called the Central Park Casino, which must have dated back into the

nineteenth century. Curiously, it vanished not long after Repeal. The Casino was not, like the Central Park Zoo, designed for the edification of the young. It was expensive, luxurious, and open practically until dawn. Jimmy Walker and his girlfriend played there. So did Leo Reisman's orchestra. People kept asking, "Who is that piano player?" We were told that his name was Eddy Duchin. And soon Brunswick, which was recording Reisman at the time, decided that its labels for the orchestra's recordings had better add Duchin's name—the first instance, I am sure, in which an instrumental soloist was so honored. I look forward to the coming resurrection of upper-register dining in the Park, though I note with regret that nothing will be happening after 6 P.M.

Peter Diamand, small, dapper, with a dry turn of wit, succeeded Sir Rudolf Bing and the Earl of Harewood as director of the Edinburgh Festival—an environment enhancer of another sort—eleven years ago. I encountered Mr. Diamand a few mornings later at Rumpelmayer's, over French toast (mine) and plain, fried eggs (his). Despite this language barrier, the operation went well. The Edinburgh Festival—this year's, in August and September, will be the thirtieth—occupies, in full flight, a large part of the

city for which it is named: proportionately as much space as the Newport Jazz Festival-New York occupies in our town in June and July. There the resemblance ends. Diamand, who left his native Germany in the thirties to look for work in Holland and was fortuitously made secretary to Artur Schnabel, thus launching himself on a career in music, was interned by the Nazis in Holland during the Second World War, escaped, and joined the Resistance. When I had breakfast with him, he was in town to line up acts for the 1978 Edinburgh Festival. The programs for this year and next have, for the most part, already been arranged; this year's includes performances by the American Brass Quintet, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, the Vienna Philharmonic, the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig, Peter Pears, Alicia de Larrocha, and a young soprano named Jennifer Smith, a girl he is very high on. Another young girl he was very high on, once upon a time, he told me, was one with a Dutch mother and an English father named Audrey Hepburn, who tried out for the corps de ballet of the Holland Festival shortly after the war, when Diamand was its general manager. No one but Diamand wanted her in the corps. Years later, he met her at the London première of the film of "My Fair Lady." Looking for a smile



"Naturally, neither Edwina nor myself is your ordinary, run-of-the-mill, average televiewer."

from her, he reminded her he had been her only champion when she failed to make the ballet. "That was the luckiest thing that ever happened to me" was all she said.

I asked Diamand whether the Scots still feel the need of the Roman wall to protect them from the annual onslaught of performers from all over the world. He said, "No, there's none of that. But when the city fathers of Edinburgh were interviewing me for my present post one of them, perhaps not recognizing my origins, said, 'We'll be delighted to have you, Mr. Diamand. Our last director was a foreigner.' Meaning Lord Harewood, an Englishman."

Smithsonian Gathering

THE third Bicentennial display of the National Portrait Gallery, "Abroad in America: Visitors to the New Nation, 1776-1914," which is a loan exhibition of some three hundred items highlighting observations made by distinguished foreign visitors to this country (from Mrs. Trollope and Alexis de Tocqueville to Sholom Aleichem and H. G. Wells) over a period of a hundred and thirty-eight years, has just opened in Washington, in the vast, Doric-facaded building that was once the old Patent Office Building and now houses the Portrait Gallery and the National Collection of Fine Arts. A preview-opening dinner, tendered by the Smithsonian Institution and by the Portrait Gallery, one of its bureaus, was held on the third floor, in the American Victorian Renaissance Great Hall—an area that was once given over to the wards of a Civil War hospital and celebrated by Walt Whitman, who made succoring visits. "Two of the immense apartments," he wrote, "are filled with high and ponderous glass cases crowded with models in miniature of every kind of utensil, machine or invention that ever entered into the mind of man to conceive. . . . Between these cases . . . were placed the sick; beside the great long double row of them, up and down the middle of the hall. Many . . . are very bad . . . with wounds and amputations." No traces of any of this were evident at the dinner, whose four courses were a brave selection from an 1842 Boston forty-two-dish feast honoring Charles Dickens, a visitor whose reflections, in "Martin Chuzzlewit" and other writings, inspired a number of the exhibits, among them an 1868 woodcut of Dickens (on the occasion of his second trip here) called "The British Lion in

America." The *Bar, Sauce Mousseline, Russe; Dinde, Sauce aux Huîtres; Asperges Mimosa; and Bombe de Citron Vert* found us at a table that included Peter G. Powers, the Smithsonian's general counsel; Mrs. Katie Scofield Louchheim, a local National Portrait Gallery fan and benefactress; and Mrs. George H. Mahon, whose husband, one of the Smithsonian's regents, is chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. (The Smithsonian's federal appropriation for fiscal 1975 was seventy-four million dollars.) We admired a necklace of gold discs that Mrs. Mahon was wearing, and she said they bore the likenesses of six of the seven Presidents under whom her husband, who hails from Texas, had served. "I haven't got President Ford yet," she said. "We came here in 1934. George has been in Congress longer than anyone else. My father was a cotton buyer in Loraine, Texas. The farmers brought the cotton in. Father used to stand on the street and pull that cotton. We've seen many changes in Washington since we came."

"Georgetown isn't what it used to be," Mrs. Louchheim said. "The peddlers are all over Wisconsin Avenue. The cafeteria in this building is the best in town."

"I'm not crazy about the architecture of the Hirshhorn Museum," Mr. Powers said, "but now that the National Air and Space Museum Building is up, it makes the Hirshhorn fit better on the Mall."

Following a brief speech by Marvin Sadik, the gallery's director, all hands adjourned to the exhibition, on the first floor. Paintings by Gilbert Stuart, Charles Willson Peale, William Sidney

Mount, Thomas Sully. Broadside of anti-slavery societies. Mathew Brady photographs. Portraits of Emerson, Julia Ward Howe, John Quinn, James G. Blaine, and T'zu-hsi, the Empress Dowager of China. Ballroom scenes. Courtroom scenes. Engravings galore. "Slaves Escaping Through the Swamp," by Thomas Moran, and "The Unveiling of the Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World," by his brother Edward. Hat worn by Caruso. Cartoons, diaries, letters, busts, newspaper articles, books. "Scene in a Quaker Meeting House" and "Cupid at a Rout at Cincinnati." Too much to describe. Go to the old Patent Office Building and see it yourself. Runs through November 13th. Be sure to get the catalogue—a book, really. Twenty-nine essays, a hundred and eighty illustrations, succinctly captioned. Hardcover or softcover.

The Bicentennial has not caused the Smithsonian to wax chauvinistic. Rembrandt Peale's oil of José Francisco, Abbé Correia de Serra, a Portuguese botanist and diplomat who spent eight years here in the early eighteenth century, is mounted over an excerpt from the subject's writings which reads:

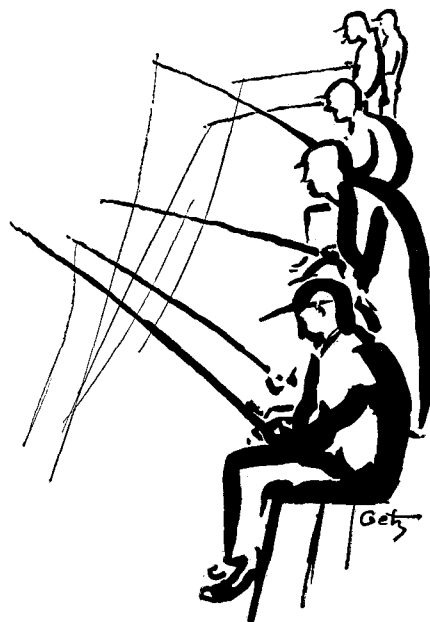
I have studied with some degree of attention the literary seminaries of America, and remarked the diseases to which they are liable in their beginnings, and under which most of them lead afterwards a lingering existence. One of the most pernicious is the mediocrity of views in a great number of people and the mediocrity of science in those that aspire to be institutions. . . . Immediately as a seminary of learning is instituted, people of great and contagious mediocrity, chiefly New Englanders, squat in them, and the seminarians become rickety in point of science. . . . The general prejudice in favour of clerical instruction produces everywhere the same evil.

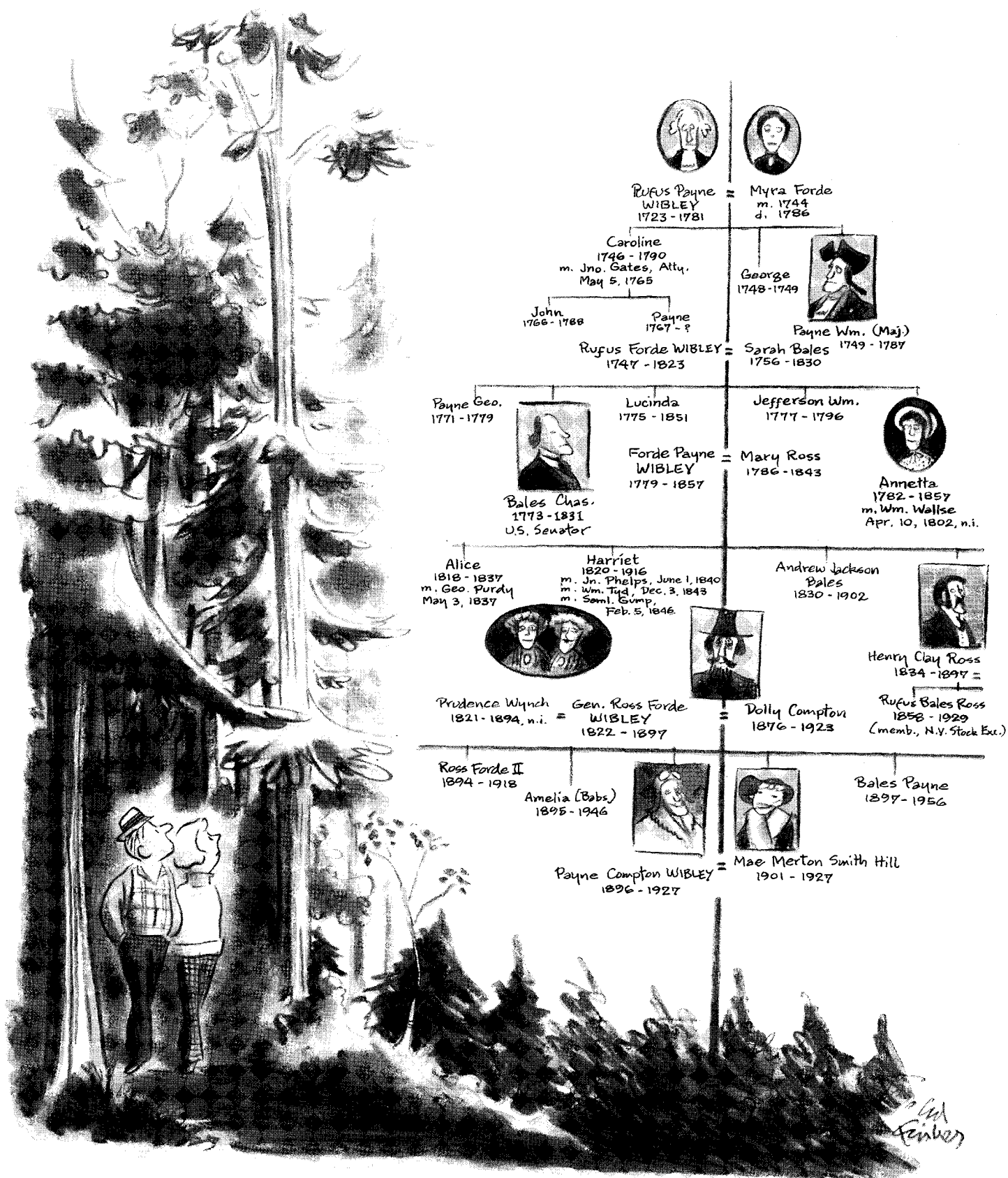
For a more benevolent attitude toward New England, see the British Lion on the citizens of the town that gave him the oyster-sauced turkey:

They are, by nature, frank, brave, cordial, hospitable, and affectionate. Cultivation and refinement seem but to enhance their warmth of heart and ardent enthusiasm; and it is the possession of these latter qualities in a most remarkable degree, which renders an educated American one of the most endearing and most generous of friends.

Jazzy

AT the Casablanca Disco, 215-32 Jamaica Avenue, in Queens Village, Marcus St. John, a young man with a deep voice, sat close to a microphone and presided over a dance floor.





"This is a Jazzy Affair," he said. "Jazzy's dancers are about to dance for your viewing pleasure. This is a Jazzy Affair." His voice was carried over a potent sound system to several hundred black people who were gathered around the dance floor. "Jazzy Lorraine, Jazzy Gwendolyn, Jazzy Hannah, Jazzy Vera, Jazzy Debbie, Jazzy

Deborah, Jazzy Alexandria, and Jazzy Tony—these are Jazzy's dancers. Jazzy's dancers will be dancing off of 'S.W.A.T.," Marcus St. John said. Jazzy's dancers were graceful and well rehearsed. Their manner made use of idioms from discothèque and from modern dance. After the dancing, there was a moment's pause. "This

is a Jazzy Affair," Marcus St. John then said. "Ladies and gentlemen, this is definitely a Jazzy Affair."

The dancers returned, but as models, joined by several other models. Some were in tennis clothes, others in beachwear. One man wore long robes of an Arab cut. "Jazzy Lorraine wears a tennis ensemble, and she wears a



"Of course everybody is looking at you accusingly. You are, after all, the accused."

sun-visor cap to protect her delicate eyes," said Marcus St. John. "Jazzy Tony is wearing a red-and-white polyester tennis outfit. He accentuates the outfit with a white sweater and a white cap." Tony walked around the dance floor. He arrived at a corner of the room where several members of his family, including his brother, his sister, and his grandmother, were standing. Tony gave a special turn for his family. "Yea, Bubba!" said Tony's brother.

"Everyone here is pretty," said a girl from Manhattan who was watching the show. "You just wouldn't dare come here unless you were pretty."

Lester, a guest model, came out on the dance floor. He wore clothes that were in a different spirit from the other clothes being modelled. Lester wore, among other things, platform shoes that were about a foot high. "Notice Lester's shoes as he lights up for you," Marcus St. John said. Lester brought one of his shoes up to one of his hands, felt for a small switch on the instep, flicked it, and activated a small electric light in the toe. He repeated the process on the other foot. Lester got a round of applause. "It's a different look for 1976," Marcus St. John said. Lester's outfit was regarded by onlookers as amusing but not plausible. The audience gave a

different and more serious kind of attention to a group of clothes subsumed, in a program, under the heading "Tailored Look of the 70's." One young woman who was seen in this sequence wore a white suit—close-fitting tailored white jacket and pants—with a white derby hat, white shoes, and white gloves. Another young woman wore black striped pants like the pants worn with a morning coat. "Sleek and chic," Marcus St. John said. "This is a Jazzy Affair."

All the models were seen in the finale. The disco version of "Eleanor Rigby" was heard in the background. Marcus St. John exhorted the models. "Walk the floors of the Casablanca, Debbie," he said to one young woman. "Show that you definitely know how to strut in a Jazzy way."

After the show, a visitor talked to Marcus St. John downstairs at the Casablanca, in an area formerly given over to bowling. "I'm definitely trying to be an actor, model, announcer," he said. "Right now I'm an accounting major at Queens College, but I am definitely pursuing this as a career. I can do a show like this with just a few notes, you know—just a list of the clothes, and so forth. I can keep it going on my own." Sheryl Nash, who runs Jazzy, Inc., the sponsor of this

and other disco fashion events, and who also works as a computer operator at the Manhattan Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital, came up to congratulate Marcus St. John. Around them, the models, together with some young designers who had had clothes in the show, packed up.

Upstairs, by the entrance to the Casablanca Disco, there was a table covered with leaflets of various sizes announcing other special discothèque presentations. One announced a show at the Casablanca featuring "Dennis Greene and the Black Goddess Models." "Please prepare your mind, body and soul for the No. 1 fashion-disco sensation of '76," this leaflet read. Another leaflet, decorated in the manner of Aubrey Beardsley, announced a discothèque show called "Fashion A La Carte." Also on the table were some of the programs for the Jazzy fashion show. These programs had slick black covers. At the end was printed a small creed called "JAZZY'S WAY." It read, in part, "Jazzy's way of making life pleasant is a group of young dancers, fantastic models, and creative designers doing their thing. One young lady has combined all this goodness into a mist of wonderful things for young and old talented minds, body and soul. JAZZY is here to entertain you!"

ON NOT SHOOTING SITTING BIRDS

THERE is no control over memory. Quite soon you find yourself being vague about an event which seemed so important at the time that you thought you'd never forget it. Or unable to recall the face of someone who you could have sworn was there forever. On the other hand, trivial and meaningless memories may stay with you for life. I can still shut my eyes and see Victoria grinding coffee on the pantry steps, the glass bookcase and the books in it, my father's pipe rack, the leaves of the sandbox tree, the wallpaper of the bedroom in some shabby hotel, the hairdresser in Antibes. It's in this way that I remember buying the pink Milanese-silk underclothes, the assistant who sold them to me, and coming into Bond Street holding the parcel.

I had started out in life trusting everyone and now, at twenty-two, I trusted no one. So I had few acquaintances and no close friends. It was perhaps in reaction against the inevitable loneliness of my life that I'd find myself doing bold, risky, even outrageous things without hesitation or surprise. I was usually disappointed in these adventures and they didn't have much effect on me, good or bad, but I never quite lost the hope of something better or different.

One day, I've forgotten now where, I met this young man who smiled at me, and when we had talked a bit I agreed to have dinner with him in a couple of days' time. I went home excited, for I'd liked him very much, and began to plan what I should wear. I had a dress I quite liked, an evening cloak, shoes, stockings, but my underclothes weren't good enough for the occasion, I decided. Next day I went out and bought the Milanese-silk chemise and drawers.

So there we were seated at a table having dinner, with a bedroom very obvious in the background. He was younger than I'd thought and stiffer, and I didn't like him much after all. He kept eying me in such a wary, puzzled way.

When we had finished our soup and the waiter had taken the plates away, he said, "But you're a lady, aren't you?" Exactly as he might have said, "But you're really a snake or a crocodile, aren't you?"

"Oh no, not that you'd notice," I said, but this didn't work. We looked glumly at each other across the gulf that had yawned between us.

Before I came to England I'd read many English novels, and I imagined I knew all about the thoughts and tastes of various sorts of English people. I quickly decided that to distract or interest this man I must talk about shooting.

I asked him if he knew the West Indies at all. He said no, he didn't, and I told him a long story of having been lost in the Dominican forest when I was a child. This wasn't true. I'd often been in the woods but never alone. "There are no parrots now," I said, "or very few. There used to be. There's a Dominican parrot in the zoo—have you ever seen it?—a sulky bird, very old, I think. However, there are plenty of other birds and we do have shooting parties. *Perdix* are very good to eat, but *ramiers* are rather bitter."

Then I began describing a fictitious West Indian shooting party, and all the time I talked I was remembering the real thing. An old shotgun leaning up in one corner of the room, the round table in the middle where we would sit to make cartridges, putting the shot in, ramming it down with a wad of paper. Gunpowder? There was that, too, for I remember the smell. I suppose the boys were trusted to be careful.

The genuine shooting party consisted of my two brothers, who shared the shotgun, some hangers-on, and me at the end of the procession, for then I couldn't bear to be left out of anything. As soon as the shooting was about to

start, I would stroll away casually and when I was out of sight run as hard as I could, crouch down behind a bush, and put my fingers in my ears. It wasn't that I was sorry for the birds, but I hated and feared the noise of the gun. When it was all over I'd quietly join the others. I must have done this unobtrusively or probably my brothers thought me too insignificant to worry about, for no one ever remarked on my odd behavior or teased me about it.

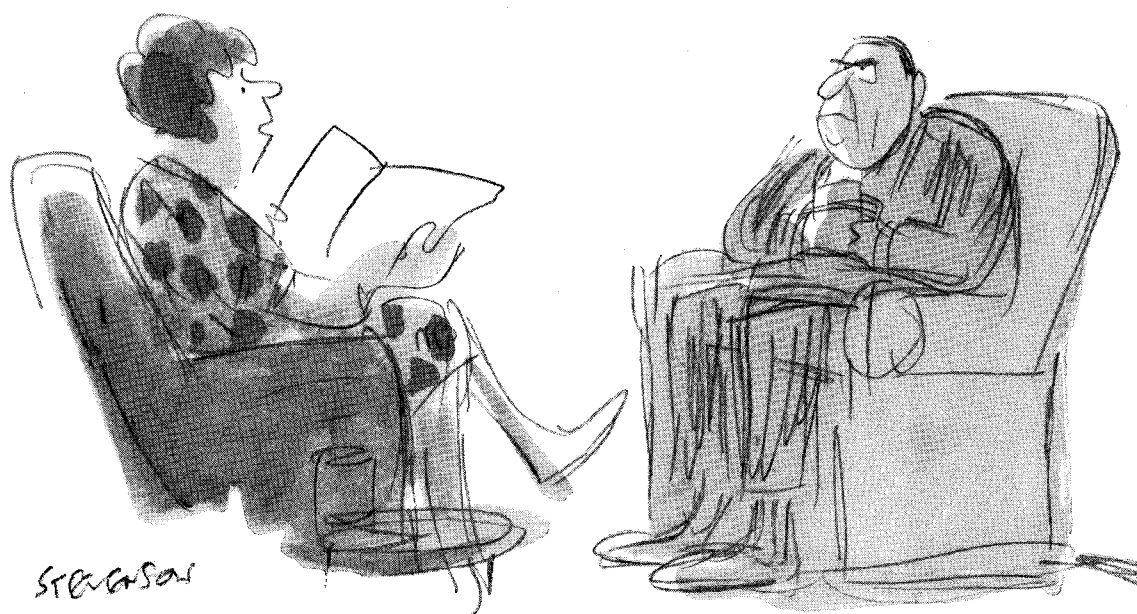
On and on I went, almost believing what I was saying, when he interrupted me. "Do you mean to say that your brothers shot sitting birds?" His voice was cold and shocked.

I stared at him. How could I convince this man that I hadn't the faintest idea whether my brothers shot sitting birds or not? How could I explain now what really happened? If I did he'd think me a liar. Also a coward and there he'd be right, for I was afraid of many things, not only the sound of gunfire. But by this time I wasn't sure that I liked him at all, so I was silent and felt my face growing as stiff and unsmiling as his.

It was a most uncomfortable dinner. We both avoided looking at the bedroom, and when the last mouthful was swallowed he announced that he was going to take me home. The way he said this rather puzzled me. Then I told myself that he probably was curious to see where I lived. Neither of us spoke in the taxi except to say, "Well, good night." "Good night."

I felt regretful when it came to taking off my lovely pink chemise, but I could still think, Some other night, perhaps; another sort of man.

I slept at once. —JEAN RHYS



"How come you're never breezy?"

LARGELY AN ORAL HISTORY OF MY MOTHER

1
THERE is something odd about voices in memory—thinking of memory as a chamber, a state or condition of mind, and the mind's running like a machine or a track star, that sort of state: the voice in there, the remembered voice is strange—in my memory, anyway. There are unmodulated, gray sounds and unidentifiable words—I mean it is a very strange mumble, with the words indistinguishable from each other and from the gray, electrical hush of the mind, remembering, running.

Sometimes, even with great effort, the words can't be made clear, although I seem to know what the figure—graylit, somewhat obscure—is talking about; and if I wash out the figure, if I make the memory purely auditory, I often hear words, phrases, fragments of a sentence (rarely a whole sentence), and what I hear is not the voice of the person who once spoke those words; I mean the music is missing, the actual sound, the actual pitch and key, the inflections, the riding-on-the-breath thing (by which you recognize a voice on the telephone): none of that is there at all. But suddenly a sentence will appear in my head; and some identifier, some cataloguer will say, *My mother said that. . . . Ha-ha*, I think amiably; *yes, she did; that's her voice*—but it isn't her voice: it's only her words—and part of what she meant.

Sometimes, then, there is a room; and the room is a conglomerate of rooms I saw her in; memory fills it, but with stuff from different years, different eras, different times of day, so that the light is different where she stands from the light that surrounds me, the observer, the one who has returned to this room that never existed in this form, to this compendium of rooms. Sometimes one's own inner voice speaks—I have an announcer who often speaks during my dreams, and who, when I am awake, makes various pronouncements from time to time: *Boy, are you worn out*—things like that. And he sometimes speaks for the graylit figure who is saying things inaudibly—he speaks for her as she once spoke for me when I was an infant; he will say something like *"One thing I'll say for myself"*—which was one of her phrases at a certain stage in her life; and then maybe something like a flashbulb goes off, and all the grayness turns swiftly to color—maybe a little washed out by glare but close

to actuality; and I may grasp, or almost grasp, the sound of my mother's voice, its actual notes, and some single speech in her real tones rather than the usual laundry-hamper jumble of dozens of her speeches spoken over the years and mixed up together without the music and inflections they once had. Then if I work with this glimpse, if I go over and over that glimpse, I may find in my memory a chair she sat in when she had that voice and not a later one: then I seat her in it like a doll, and all at once I am very small and walking toward her: she is wearing a gray tweed skirt and a white blouse, maybe silk, maybe just shiny cotton, or a black dress with very large, modernist, smeared-yellow-and-green flowers on it; one hears something—not her voice but a weird mental echo, a recording, almost, of a younger woman's voice, the words unclear but supplied, tentatively, contingently, by the announcer a moment later—by the announcer who is the master of ceremonies of my dreams, of the instruction one receives in dreams. Occasionally, the words are of this sort: she says, "Sometimes I like to lie."

"*They say*—" That's a phrase she used very often: "*they*," in "*they say*," are the keepers of respectability; there were at least three different respectabilities she was interested in—that governed by certain Orthodox or nearly Orthodox old Jewish women, ancient aunts, or second cousins; that governed by our neighbors; and that governed by the two or three social levels of Jewish "society" she moved in in the nearby city when I was young and we lived in a small town not yet turned into a dormitory suburb, a small town maybe sixty miles away from The City. "*They say* a woman is who she marries: there's something in that, but I never went that far. But I will say it

makes a difference who your husband is, and I wasn't lucky in the one I picked."

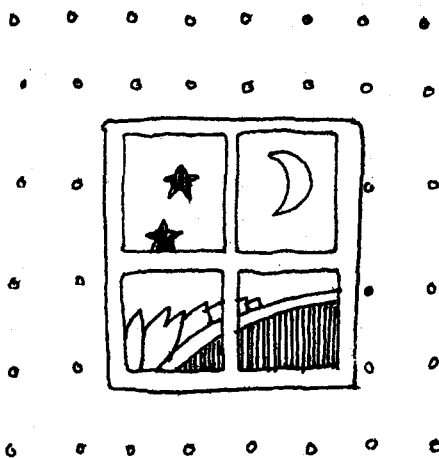
MY oral history of her—*mine*, of her—will begin, then, with my father speaking: with frequent interruptions.

My father, S. L. Cohn—usually called S.L.: when people who spoke Yiddish wanted to make trouble they called him *Esel*, or donkey or ass—my father was in his thirties when I first met him. When I was adopted. I should say that when I write "an oral history of my mother" I mean an oral history of a time when Leah, or Leila, Cohn—she renamed herself—was my mother; and only part of that time, at that. Really, not the whole of her life except as it was implied—it was always implied that there was more than I knew or would come with my best efforts (which I might never make) to know.

I think my father was generally considered a splendid-looking man, largely apricot-colored—skin and hair—and with chestnut eyes. He was big, muscular—"a war hero," Leila often pointed out.

Now, I want to use the voice of a woman, Leila, from a time a long ten years after the end of this story, when she existed only for a little while in an avatar or stage in a life cycle so brief, so well lit that that stage—to switch meanings—seems to tilt, to explode with flames, to be illuminated by collapse. She spoke with melodrama—it was a matter of style, language, and conviction; she spoke like popular fiction when she told a story; she was not talented, or an innovator, verbally; so, in her account, lives are compressed, often for no reason having to do with her vision of things so much as her wish to be interesting or her fear that things might be actually what she melodramatically said they were. Faces, houses disappear: a pear tree in flower is never mentioned; rages, ground traversed, thoughts while lying in bed become synopsized in an intake of breath and a cliché—"S.L. wanted a son." If I wanted, I could dilute the melodrama, push toward what I consider verisimilitude, but I want not to do that for a moment; I will try to do that in a little while.

She is speaking—in a chatty, sort of pushily intelligent voice: she is playacting intelligence. She is perhaps mimicking Tacitus without knowing it, or, rather, at her social level, some local style of aristocratic concision as she un-



AW



"Remember, Bert, you're 'Landmark'! Think 'Landmark,' and you'll knock 'em dead!"

derstands it, and combining that mimicry with what she knows of soap opera and movie plots: "We took you in when you was about a year and eighteen months old." She often said "you was." "You were in terrible shape. Your mother was dying in the Jewish hospital, in Xton"—the nearby city. "S.L. had left me. I don't blame him; I wasn't easy to get along with; I hadn't married him for love—the man I loved was no good, selfish, but I always liked that type. I never was religious, but I didn't believe in divorce. Are you old enough for me to tell you why S.L. left me? Well, partly the bloom was off the rose, but I'd had two sons who died—in infancy. I wasn't home either time; I always had a life of my own. One time, maybe the infant was neglected. And your sister [her real daughter, Nonie]—she was too young—it was all my fault, to leave

her in charge: but that was once. The truth is, the deaths were unexplained: they hurt me. But S.L. didn't pity me, he blamed me. One death, you see, was bad, but two—my God. I said then it was just dumb luck, but S.L. wouldn't believe me. S.L. didn't like Nonie, either. He left us both; he went to live with a trashy woman. To tell you the truth, I'd had my eye on you for a long time; I offered your mother money for you; I thought she'd do anything for money—she was crazy about money. She was a good mother to *you*: she liked you; she loved you; but she was terrible to your brother; she didn't like him. You see, no adoption agency would put me and S.L. on the list except at the bottom, because we weren't a religious household and those adoption people are all religious. Well, to tell you the truth, that's partly a lie—that's what I always said to

people—but, of course, what it was, they interviewed me and S.L. and they took a look at Nonie, and they didn't like us: we were having too good a time: those people were jealous: I was too pretty; S.L. was too selfish. And Nonie was like S.L.'s family, not smart: she was a year behind in school, and she had a bad temper. To tell you the truth, she was like S.L.'s mother: S.L. used to say that between the war and his mother it had done him in; all he wanted was a little peace. One thing I'll say for myself, I'll speak out, I'll tell the truth: it hurt S.L. that people thought we were unfit to be parents—of course, he wouldn't believe he was; he blamed it all on me; he always blamed me for everything: he was dependent on me. But I'll tell you the truth—we *were* no good as parents, but he wanted to have children; and other people aren't such hot



"Hi, you wouldn't happen to have some change on you? I'm trying to get a shot of carrot juice."

parents, either. My father was O.K., but my mother was just what S.L. always called her—a pip. I never thought of myself as a mother, to be honest with you. But we had money then, and I knew which schools were good, and I knew a lot of nice people; I could hire a good maid—a kid wouldn't have it so bad with us, and if he did—look, your father was illiterate, he was a junkman, a brawler; in those days, he drank. He was no good—he was a gambler and a bully; he never even kept himself clean; he was crazy—you know, he had very nice brothers and sisters, clean, good people, and his father was a very strict whaddayoucallit, an impressive man—I didn't like him—the father: if you ask me, he was cold and mean. And who was your mother? She was a nobody. I happened to like her; I thought she had a lot to her, a lot to offer, but she was an immigrant, she spoke with an accent, all she cared about was running that godforsaken junk yard in a little town and making money: she knew nothing, and maybe she would learn, but who could tell? I'm a real learner. She was from the Old Country—a tin-horn, a greenhorn. She was superstitious; her father was some kind of rabbi—a crazy kind, not the regular kind; he put a curse on her if she ever stopped being Orthodox, and she was

scared of the curse. And what was she doing, a bright woman like her, marrying someone like your father, anyway? People warned her; she wouldn't listen. I liked her; I asked her; she said she wasn't afraid of nothing. She was sure he would appreciate her; she didn't want to marry a man who would be doing a greenhorn like her a favor—she wanted to do all the favors. She said she wanted a toehold—a business. So she married a crazy man. Why wouldn't you be at least as well off with us as with people like that? I'll tell you one thing: she was a genius as a businesswoman; my brother Henry said so, and the one thing Henry knew was business and money, she won everybody's respect, and it wasn't just because she was so tough; she didn't care what people thought of her; she didn't flirt; she cared about two things—you and money. But you were the reason. Well, she used to come to see me, and S.L. was crazy about you; you and your mother were so close, and you were beautiful—beautiful. S.L. always went by looks, always. So when she got sick—I'll tell you the whole story. Your father couldn't stand it; he was like a child, a mean child; everyone respected your mother; she hid money from him; so one night he beat her up and took her by force and when she found she

was pregnant she said she'd get an abortion, God or no God; but she believed in that curse; and she got sick. Then she started asking people to take you in—she didn't care what happened to the other boy: your mother wasn't sentimental; she crossed him right off, but she worried about you; only nobody would take you. See, some people, her people, had been jealous of her because she'd made money—and maybe she hadn't shared it with them. And maybe they were jealous because she'd loved you—you never know how ugly people are going to be. But other people, nicer people, were scared of your father—he'd killed people—I forget who: some man, two men: it was self-defense, so he didn't have to go to jail, but he was really violent—and they were scared of the blood you had in you; they were scared you were a jinx, and anyway everyone thought you would die anyway: you cried a lot when

your mother disappeared and your father slapped you around; your nurse was drunk; you wouldn't talk or walk anymore—you wouldn't eat. Your mother didn't want me to have you—she said I wasn't serious—but what choice did she have? I went and got you anyway. My God, you were covered with sores, bruises—I threw up. I had my mother with me; she washed you; I couldn't bear to touch you; the nurse was there, drunk, shouting, she tried to hit me—I outshouted her, I put the fear of the penitentiary into her for child murder: it was some scene, let me tell you; my heart was *pounding*—I knew if I took you in, if S.L. heard I had this sick child, he'd think I had a good heart, that he was wrong about me, and he'd want to help—he was very sentimental; he lived for sentiment, if you ask me. Well, he did come running. He came back to me. But everything misfires—there's always a surprise. He came back to me, but he loved you. Oh, how he loved you. . . ."

FROM now on, I will run this history, this oral history; I will order it, arrange it.

AT first, only my nurse, a woman they hired, an Alsatian Frenchwoman named Anne Marie, could get

me to eat, could feed me without my being ill. Then Nonie could do it—she was small for her age and seemed like a child to me. Then S.L., and finally Leila. They had rented a larger house, too—quite a nice house, and everyone was nice to everyone else and kept the atmosphere pleasant as part of the attempt to nurse and restore the silent and stricken child.

They were very pleased when I first walked again, when I first tentatively smiled. I would say they experienced—oh, self-respect, and happiness.

There is little doubt that they saved my life.

In dreams, there is no loss without a happiness first.

II

NONIE began to like me less when I grew stronger, and she and I became enemies, actually; and, either by accident or on purpose, or in some combination, when I was with her she managed to hurt me—physically, I mean. And I could endure the physical pain but not the pain in my mind that Nonie was such a person, and that she was not struck dead. The physical wound on this one occasion was such that I had to have stitches. I was sick with gloom, perhaps even with childish despair, at the stink of medicines and the itching and stinging, the crust of perpetual discomfort, of the roughness, of the blood scabbed and stuck to gauze bandages and to me; and the eccentric no-footing, the no-safety-against-injury feeling that one has after the violation of physical assault and harm. I could not endure the world. I had no proof, no images of human goodness that comforted me enough to make up for what I felt. Anyway, there is anesthesia in despair.

S.L. tried often enough in those days to console me, but I would not listen to him. One afternoon, he woke me from a nap, an uneasy nap, lifted me out of bed—me, I consisted of stitches, scabs, and bandages, a head aching with bad dreams.

He dressed me himself.

At first, he kept his hat on. After a while, he took it off. He took me down the stairs. He held my wrist in his enormous, rough-skinned, slightly sweaty palm—a palm blankly suggestive of a meaning I could do nothing about, certainly not speak of, except stare at inwardly, blankly, from time to time—and dragged me along in a sort of chivying, let's-play-this-game-and-you-be-excited way; but it physically hurt, the movements pulled

the skin around the stitches; and furthermore I didn't trust him anymore.

So I made not hesitant, I-love-you-but-I-don't-want-to-do-this noises; rather, I made I-don't-like-this-you-are-torturing-me noises that always—always—embarrassed him.

And he *was* embarrassed—but he insisted.

We went out the front door from the stillness of the house into the blithering, humming afternoon heat and glare of a Midwestern summer day; we went the short distance to the driveway and climbed into his car.

I know now that Momma's car was wrecked: she had wrecked it. The light came from everywhere into Daddy's car and bounced on the metal, and struck me on my bandaged face, here like a bat, there like a splinter, there like a board of yellow wood. I said nothing. My father started up the car, and we drove along one of the three streets atop the ridge where our house

was, past large silent houses set, each one, that day, in hard, glaring light. You could not look directly at anything, the glare was so painful.

I suppose the *I* can move around in memory as it does in dreams, changing its connection to things, its degree of relationship, its elevation. I can remember my father's face as if I were a man, too, that day; or I can remember what the child saw: his father's face blurs out: it grows large, moves upward, swings, is heavy with chin; I see the bottom arcs of his spectacles, I see his nostrils: the expression of his face is mysterious, somewhat frightening—the child sees that but is too sullen to understand: he merely *sees*, and nothing else.

The tires make slapping noises on the stickily partly melted macadam of the street. At the edge of the ridge where the road curves down, a few houses, irregularly spaced, stand between us and the view of the town



"I've been meaning to ask you, Doctor, what do you think of Jimmy Carter's teeth?"

below. The sun is more merciless here. We sweep down and down into yet hotter reaches, into the lower town, and we park in front of a Buick dealer's, and Daddy says, "How would you like to buy a car for your mother?"

One wall of the dealer's showroom was a mirror that went from floor to ceiling; it was the biggest mirror I'd ever seen. And two walls of the showroom were glass between you and the world; and there was a distress of reflections on them. The floor was so highly polished that my legs and bandaged, peering head (with broad horizontal ripples and considerable distortion) were repeated in it. The enormous cars around me held reflections in their paint and chrome. The number and scattering and multiples of reflections suggested not so much an infinite vanity as an infinite readying for study.

The salesmen—there were two—were very thin, smaller than my father, very well dressed but not so well dressed as S.L. They were insinuating: good-looking with no promise of warmth, only with a promise of urgency, of thrills; I was too sore, too wounded to want their attentions, their loud voices directed at me with false affection and false admiration. Or their physical attentions: lifting me up to see a radiator ornament, for instance. My father said, "Now, watch this. I want you fellas to see—" And he took a packet of money from his pocket and said, "The young fella wants to spend six thousand dollars on a car for his mother." He said to me, "Take a look: those are thousand-dollar bills, Alan." He handed the money to me, and I looked, and then he took the money away from me, folded it, and put it in my shirt pocket, saying something like "You're a rich man—you can afford to show these gentlemen how much you love your mother."

The money rustled in—and crowded—my shirt pocket and pressed against my chest. The mirrors around me seemed to rustle silently. As I breathed—blinked—turned—reflections fluttered. The salesmen patted me; one or both knelt to say, "He's a good kid, isn't he?" Daddy said later, "They smelled carrion. They smelled raw meat. They knew we were there to spend money. . . ."

I walked away from the salesmen: one of them remained squatting, one knee forward, one knee up; I walked in the flicker, in the subtle storm of altering and toyed-with-perspective images and reflections of all the mirrors and mirrorlike surfaces around me; and everywhere I saw a damaged child—

ONE ART

The art of losing isn't hard to master;
so many things seem filled with the intent
to be lost that their loss is no disaster.

Lose something every day. Accept the fluster
of lost door keys, the hour badly spent.
The art of losing isn't hard to master.

Then practice losing farther, losing faster:
places, and names, and where it was you meant
to travel. None of these will bring disaster.

I lost my mother's watch. And look! my last, or
next-to-last, of three loved houses went.
The art of losing isn't hard to master.

I lost two cities, lovely ones. And, vaster,
some realms I owned, two rivers, a continent.
I miss them, but it wasn't a disaster.

—Even losing you (the joking voice, a gesture
I love) I shan't have lied. It's evident
the art of losing's not too hard to master
though it may look like (*Write it!*) like disaster.

—ELIZABETH BISHOP

for some reason, my image was credible to me in my bandages, disguised, as my reflection was not when I was not marked up, not bandaged.

My father's voice, loud, unmusically rural—it is easier to dig up what I remember the sound of his voice to be, although the sound, the actual sound, of his voice, too, eludes me—was also hugely assertive, insistently good-natured; it insisted that *you* ought to be good-natured—the sound filled the showroom, not with theatricality but with pedagogy. Daddy said to me, "Pick out any car you want, young fella—any one. You got enough money to pay for it—there's enough there to choke a horse."

I looked up—uncomprehendingly. His face always had in those days a ripe-apricot, summerish, slightly swollen glamour—a thickish self-satisfaction-anger that was like a secret along my spine (sometimes I disliked it; but I breathed it in, or was stabbed with it, and then held it in me); now there was a—a tone—a metal edge, more or less hidden, hurried and exotic, like a sled runner; he was sledding, on a hot day, among the mirrors: a downhill ex-

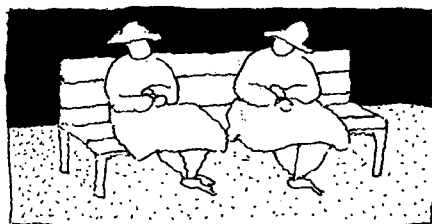
citement (you lay on a sled; someone lay on you; you were half suffocated; the adventure was white and swift; you were at once highly, whizzingly inadequate, and supremely, rushingly adequate—on the sled on the snow); the sled runner was a—a display—of the thing that money was easy for him, that he could—morally? out of sheer respectability, because of money?—control these men: the adventures of his comprehension, always, when I knew him, took place in abrupt installments, each of which he insisted was final.

I remember the faint stink of the cars, the smell of men's talcum and cologne. Above and through the other smells came Daddy's burnt blond smell—a smell always attached to heat, the heat of the sun, of radiators, of his body, his blood. I saw reflections in his glasses: and there were the odors of his summer suit, wrinkled, beige, ironed carefully.

The showroom was a place for a child's standing still, largely waiting for the grownups while, with limited comprehension, he *spied* on what was going on. If he did anything, someone would say, "Here, don't do that—you'll hurt yourself."

But the money, folded up (and smelling of paper), that was in my pocket, not far from my bandaged chin, not far from my eyes and nose and my father's craziness, tilted the world and made me the ruler of this grownup place.

I wasn't sure at first that he could manage it, that the money could man-



d. ehrenberg



age it. I disbelieved him partly because I had begun to learn that he was, in certain ways, to be disbelieved always. His love was tricky; I guess one of the first things you learn when you're a child is to say "I don't believe you," or if not to say it to think it while you turn your face away politely.

I did not want to be a fool. I was partly seasick from the mirrored flutterings. The final, hard sense of the actuality he was offering me, of what I could do now, was like when I was one of the dozen children on a lawn

who stood still, who had not yet begun to play.

Why should it be cheering to *own* the attention of salesmen, anyway?

Also, I did not want life to happen, I did not want to be cheered up. To want something, to enjoy something, to enjoy what my father was doing would have meant to feel again along my nerves, excitedly, the terrible surprises and then no-surprises of my usual living rather than the glum, half-mad endurance of enjoying nothing, of being hardly aware of pain, of being

without hope in the manner of a wounded child.

But it was a temptation. To have the say-so of a grownup. The child became taut-bodied, like a dog watching a stick being waved in the air. I was almost willing to want this, to half want it, anyway: to condescend to want it—gracelessly, with half a spirit only, not like a dog, like a child, a suspicious, spoiled, handsome child.

My father was, in his affections, full of pretendings; he was an older kid, rebellious, covered with weeds, with



dirt—he looked to one side of me, over my head. He was uplifted—and—soft—willful—rounded—apricot-colored—breathing rapidly in the conditioned air; he had a bold toughness of manner, an excitement in his rights as a customer, a rough implicitness. He was at the center of what was happening; he was both hard and soft, he was *I-will*, *I-can*, and *I-choose*, and that odd addendum *I'm-not-a-bad-man-I-will-make-this-child-happy*.

Was it merely power he gave me? Power for the moment as in a game of cops-and-robbers when you hold a toy pistol? Fantasy? Sometimes it seems to me, looking back, what we had was a love affair similar to a grownup one; and this was a moment as in a movie in which a man takes his mistress to Monte Carlo and confers on her staggering glamour, almost a royalty.

He gave me the salesmen, their pride, this place as a playground. He bound it all up, he controlled part of the grownup world, he stamped it flat and held it still—for me—to climb on, to play with as I wished.

He wore a look of rising above the greed that animated the salesmen—he didn't like to be careful about money; he was laughing at cars, at the salesmen, at their world, at grownups. The salesmen grew more and more oblique, oily, and resentful: each

jeered at my father beneath a deference. It was as if I could see under a table, or under a stretched sheet, what they were doing: they were hating us.

They would not full-heartedly enter my father's project of pleasing the hurt child.

I was pleased; I was proud, ashamed of us, tentatively arrogant. I sort of sadly enjoyed myself. I touched a car's metal—left finger marks—I thought my father was wrong to arouse so much enmity, but it was stirring to be this proud. A worm, a canker of half amusement, of personal superiority—to people like these, to caring about money, finger marks, these people's lives—began to buoy me up, bear me along.

I kept seeing reflections: a bandaged child knelt near a hubcap, looked into a bumper, and was seen in each; each car was printed with images of me if I went near it. Once, I took the money out of my pocket and unfolded it and held it up to the mirror and looked at its reflection.

Toward the end, I looked at the cars in the mirror: I walked along the mirror and poked with my finger or laid my entire palm and fingers on part of the reflection of a car.

I asked Daddy to help me get inside one of the cars. He told me to tell one of the salesmen to do it. They both came over. One opened the car

door, and they lifted me—one of them did—onto the seat behind the steering wheel. I grasped the steering wheel, looked out the windshield. I climbed out again, went over to Daddy, took his hand, and just stood there.

"Are you through?" he said. "Is that the one you want?"

I nodded. I'd chosen THE BLUE ONE.

DADDY insisted they let us drive the blue car home then and there—he said he'd bring it in the next day for servicing: he overrode the salesman and the manager; a wall, a part of a wall, lifted, and we drove down a ramp and into the sunlight, which was like an itchy yellow serge rolled and stuffed everywhere. Patches of palely centered, stilled light were hung on lampposts, aluminum screens, on all visible

metal and glass. (The inferiority of other people showed itself in the inferiority of their consolations.) I felt sick from the crossplay of excitement and the cramped grayness of the spirit of being wounded. The car was odorous, full of plumpish slidings, and specialness. I heard the tires thumping on the street.

The street turned left and began to rise so steeply that when you saw this rise in the road, if you were in a good temper you grew excited because the car might somersault backward. Your eyes grew big: you rose up onto your knees and stared—and waited.

Very quickly it happened that out the window on my father's side of the car roofs appeared, an expanse of sky with chimney stacks in it, the distant towers of a bridge: the sweet and silent simplification was like a hand sweeping away a city and making a clear, spiritual space for the rich, for the specially consoled.

Daddy's joke or game—of having me buy the car—seemed to happen with more reality, more good humor, in memory. Pain-with-hope is like climbing on something when you're quite young: you may scratch your knees, lose your breath, and be frightened to boot; but you're somewhere, there is more than pain: perhaps there is a ring around the pain of a sense of accomplishment.

The belief that there is happiness, or tenderness—not the hysterical belief of someone beleaguered or coerced but the conviction of the child-scientist, the child-egotist—that such things are actual, actually hurts, but in a friendly way. It aches as much as the safe return when you thought you would never get down from where you climbed to, and you do get down and stand still and pant, horrified, proud, and relieved. The reality, then, unless you're very simple, is for older kids, and you do feel older; you feel breezes, gooseflesh; the skin of the mind is very sore; the skin of the heart tingles with I-don't-know-what.

I sat on the car's new upholstery; I sat with my hands on the seat on either side of my thighs; I looked up at my father: he had his hat on, his head was just slightly cocked; he was *driving*. He was pleased with himself. I had no sense of there being a road under the car, or of the road ahead of the car being joined to anything such as ground or the town below us: the road was a hanging bridge, a flap placed somehow in volumes of intervening and kind, sunlit, *lucky* people's air and space.

It was not my business to know the topography of our ridge; I did not know the ridge was joined to the town: I left all that to my father.

I kneeled on the seat with the sense and swift taste of marvels as we ascended into the flesh of sunlight and churchly silence of the moneyed houses on the ridge. My father, who was often sentimental about divinity, said, "Life is just a bowl of cherries, God's in His Heaven, all's right with the world."

Mutability ought never speak of immutability.

DADDY's face now had a certain weary human pleasure in it, an I-told-you-so look.

The human uproar of that in me, of his caring, and the evidence of Daddy's force and wallet, the tremendousness of our luck as a family, the size of his legs going from there to down there (the accelerator), his faint sweatiness as the car air vent blew and roared in a minor way, I liked these things a lot.

We drove into the driveway of our house: the gravel scattered.

"Honk the horn for your mother," Daddy said.

I did.

The sound flew out, at my instigation. I was the-boy-on-my-father's-big-lap. The buttons of his suit pushed against my behind as I pushed against the horn.

"That's enough," he said.

My sister Nonie appeared at a window and called out, "What is it? Why are you honking?"

"Get your mother and come outside and see what we have here, see what we have for you," Daddy said.

I heard the house door open—oh, my God, those long-ago domestic sounds! Then the screen door slammed—and Momma said, "Nonie, don't slam the door." Then there were FOOTSTEPS. On the front deck.

Shadows appeared, jerkily half racing over steps, over gravel. Those sounds are clear, are not like voices in memory, and the sight too is clear of Momma wearing a black outfit with a big, big lacelike collar; and she had a look as if she required immediate shelter, immediate, from the sun, from heat: she was moist and busty and succulent and frail. (Nonie had fat legs and hips and a babyish face; she was rubbery, outdoorsy.)

Momma often had a gentle look of *the-pain-has-begun*. It was a look of fierce but softened exasperation. Momma was affected by—*everything*: she was sensitive to—*everything*: she was endlessly active in being affected;

she was melodramatic in appearance: blacks, whites, reds, a lusciousness, a temper, a heated blooming, a heat of expressiveness—how can one convey the out-of-date way, the coquetry, the highly codified and elaborate style of her being *out-of-doors* (in sight of the neighbors), ready to flirt with S.L.? And then the exasperation taking control of her, a sneering, crazy temper: she didn't like that car. When she and Nonie reached the second-to-bottom step, from which they could see the car, I saw Momma's face was made up, and sweet—to welcome Daddy—but it puckered; and she said in a half-and-half angry voice, the exact tone of which is lost but it was full of rebuke, "*What have you done now, S.L.?*" Perhaps one oughtn't to ascribe words to her but only an astonished anger. The sunlight made shadows under Momma's eyebrows and in her mouth and under her chin: the shadows over her eyes were like a mask: she was a masked, soft bandit. She had told S.L. she wanted a small car, easy to handle and park. I remember her anger or perhaps her voice as being like a flock of crows that blackly sail out



"Hi, honey—I'm home."

THE FUNERAL SINGERS

Somewhere on a side porch, in a viny haze of light,
you and I sift through pieces of a giant puzzle
to put together for once what must be
the Atlantic—a harbor unlikely
in the purest blue, a boat with a missing piece.

From a box of dark, hand-rubbed hickory, music
spools over our scratchy silence, the needle

sticks, and when you flop back on the cool floor
I am gone in my white linen robe with stitches
of gold my mother made, constantly crossing herself.

The Angelus cants in my mouth sometimes
like a tasteless wafer. Often I sing, dreaming
what new puzzle my cash will buy,

and later, missing notes because my voice cracks
over the open box I would never look into,
I break up in front of the puzzled faces of shift
guards from St. Ignatius High, the same
bastards that took the all-city title
after spitting on our cheerleaders.

I take my cue from the other actor, his silence
after long speech I don't think anyone
truly hears. What did he mean
Render unto Caesar and the rest? I who am

the angel of song stand again in my wailing suit,
threadbare from years at the office,
cigarette burns, perhaps a little semen stain,

to make what one gaudy-cheeked woman told me
was the one road so many people needed
to find their way. In her foul breath
she hummed at my arm, croaking her thanks.

I didn't know any of those poor sons of bitches
who made me walk home thinking of a road out of town,
and I remember how once I broke down
sobbing harder than the organ.
They paid me double to hear me double their pain.

I only thought my girl was pregnant, whom I'd touched
wrongly and would die for, as the crow-footed nuns
flapped in their habits.

My voice was never half as good or pure as yours;
probably you could, if asked, disinter each face,
recount how many points scored, where we lost
that piece with the head of the fisherman.

I've spent my whole life thinking we got screwed
by a maker of defective toys, learning
how not to hear my own heart's
knocked-up and lonely wheezing.

My God, how long does a man have to sing
to hear it be right just once, to ease out
some hope for the freckled kid whose
best give-and-go didn't make a diddly damn
though it beat you back to tears

long ago defeated as you croon at his wake?

Brother of the girl who needed no help from us
to conceive her own pains, my friend,
today I sang maybe my last music, took
your check and blew it on a puzzle
of the entire charted world.

I promise even if I live to die
to get our colors in their right places, I won't
leave you alone under the vines until it's done,
until I sing like the most acute needle on earth
every note we dug out of those pressed grooves.

—DAVE SMITH

and attack, peck at, eat everything—even one's eyes. I blinked. Or she was squeezed—not by tragedy: by *minor* tragedy: squeezed by *aggravation*: squeezed so hard that rudeness squirted from her, even outdoors, where the neighbors might hear: she went slightly mad with exasperation. I could not believe at first that after my having been cheered up anything unpleasant could happen right away like this, and I was seized by that dreadful-to-grownups hilarity which is partly embarrassment or horror—but not serious horror; if one laughs aloud at such times, if there is someone not really angry, just *aggravated*, as Momma was, they will say, as I think she did, "I suppose it's nice to be a child, after all."

Sometimes when I laughed, Momma would stare at me. "He thinks we're entertainment," she would say.

Daddy said something like "Leila, it's a good car, it's a Buick, it's the best—"

She protested that he never listened

to her. When Daddy told her she was hurting my feelings, that I had selected the car, she said she didn't want to have her car selected by a child. She said she and Daddy weren't children anymore. She said Daddy made a joke of everything and that life wasn't a joke.

I turned from one grownup to the other. My bandages made a sound as I moved my head.

Momma said, "I told you I'm not good at parking. All that machine is good for is carting old women to Jewish funerals—" She said, "I'm not that kind of woman, S.L." I remember those words: she was trying to soften the occasion and her rage and to get everything back to coquetry.

Daddy said, "Can't you ever be grateful? What's wrong with you—do you have to make everyone unhappy? Don't you love anyone?"

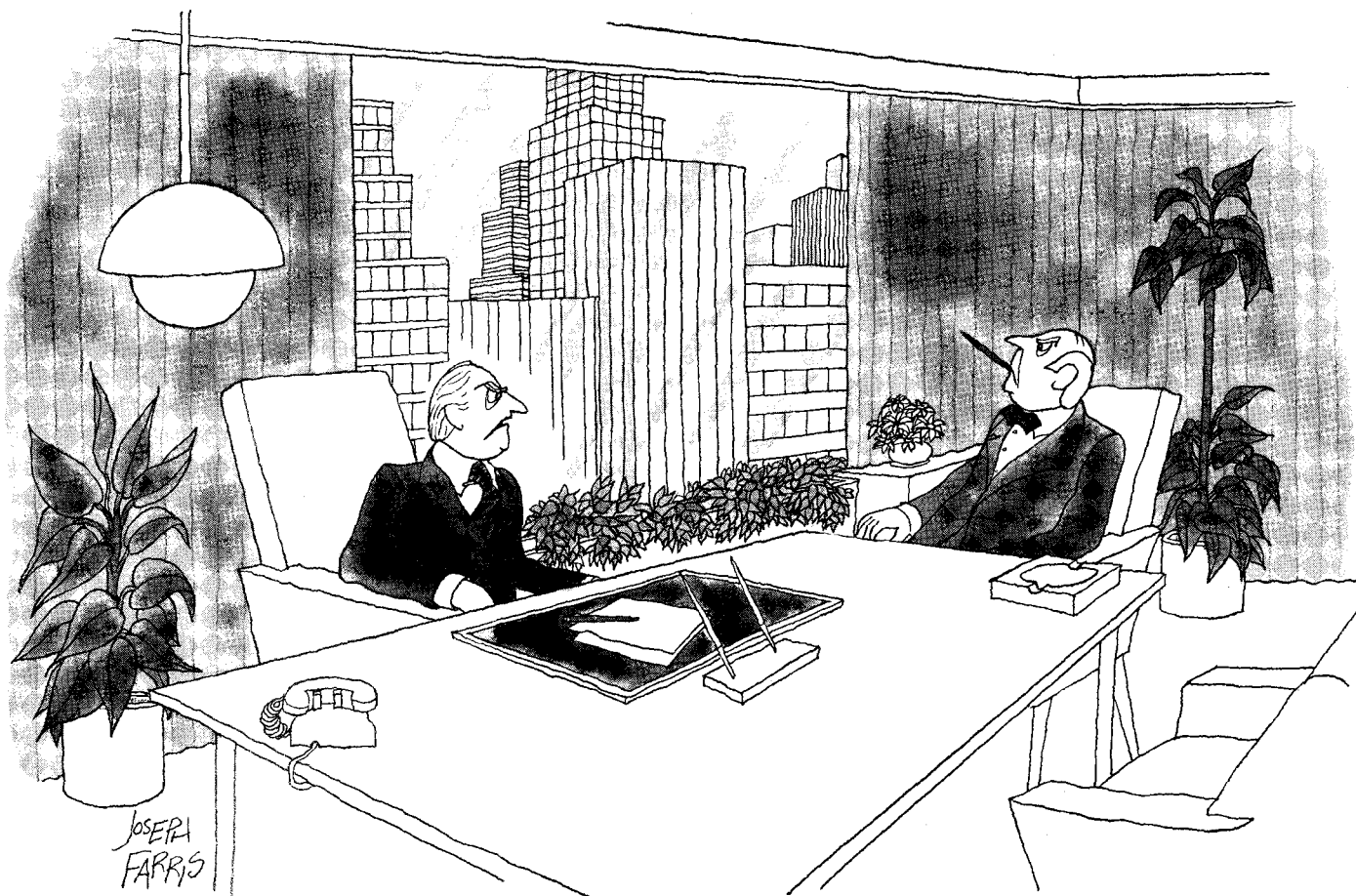
Nonie said, "I don't like it either, Daddy—I don't like the color."

I rushed forward to kick her. She dodged. Momma said, putting her hand on my shoulder, "Leave her alone, Alan; if I had light eyes like you, I'd like a blue car, too—you look good in that color."

Nonie, meanwhile, was opening the car door, the rear door; but the hinges had never been fastened, and the door continued to open, it wavered, began to separate from the car; while Nonie stared, screamed—screamed again—the whole door teetered into the air, turned horizontal, seemed to both float and fall—heavily—to the ground, to the gravel, where it crunched and slid and tore its paint with a grating and continuing sound. . . .

When the silence returned, I felt a grimace on my face. I was staring at





"Let me put it this way, Woodbury. The magic's gone out of our merger."

the door on the ground. Momma said, "My God! Will they take the car back now? Why did the door do that, S.L.? What do you call it when a door does a thing like that?"

Daddy, thinking it was someone's fault—it had to be someone's fault—shouted blindly to Nonie, "WHAT DID YOU DO TO THAT DOOR?"

Nonie shouted back, "I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO IT!"

Poor Daddy. He came over and grabbed my shoulder and pulled me away from Momma. He had a look of great sternness and don't-lie-to-me-ishness on his face. He shouted at me, "WHAT DID YOU DO TO THAT DOOR?"

He was trying to get to the truth of the matter.

Daddy used often to say, "We're all fools and clowns—we have to make the best of a bad business."

III

MY mother thought real citizenship in a real country—as opposed to ghetto awfulness and claustrophobia and helplessness—real middle-classness in America and getting-away-from-the-rabbis, meant being *modern*, hypocritical, sort of crimi-

nal according to Old Testament notions, criminal-in-a-way, with style, in deep respectability, while keeping-your-nerve, showing you knew how-the-game-went, and living with consequent ironic near-a-nervous-breakdown high amusement and speed and astuteness and duplicity.

She was willing. She was a semi-pro. She admired people who were better at being American than she was: "Frankly, I'm a social climber—I'm learning." Her sincerest and most earnest regard was for people who were overtly and gaudily successful in the way she admired: "No flies grow on her—she knows what's what."

We lived in a small town—a Midwestern small town but not a constricted, airless one: a semi-wide-open river port with a noticeable upper class who took their pleasures mostly in near or distant cities, with a sense of freedom and of sophistication.

Momma changed the way she looked according to the season and time of day, to whether we had company or not, to her mood, to the social standing of who was coming to the house: of course, something is the same, or many things are, in the woman no matter how she is dressed, but the things that

are the same are inexpressible, are The Unexpressed where Momma is concerned so far as I know. When I was little, while she was precisely visible at any one time, over a period of hours she was blurry in a rain of transformations: she dressed differently and wore no makeup or different makeup and her hair was different at breakfast, in the afternoon, at dinner, in the evening, at bedtime. There wasn't anyone else who changed so noticeably, so richly. She said, "I don't know, it's all a lot of work—I think I have to work harder than S.L. does—no one gives me credit for the work it is." Her physical expressiveness was one of caroming inside various fashions and off mirrors and in self-preparation on the way to *getting things done*—that was her phrase.

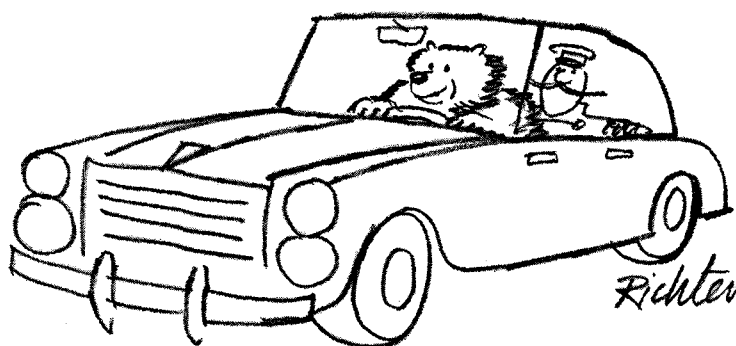
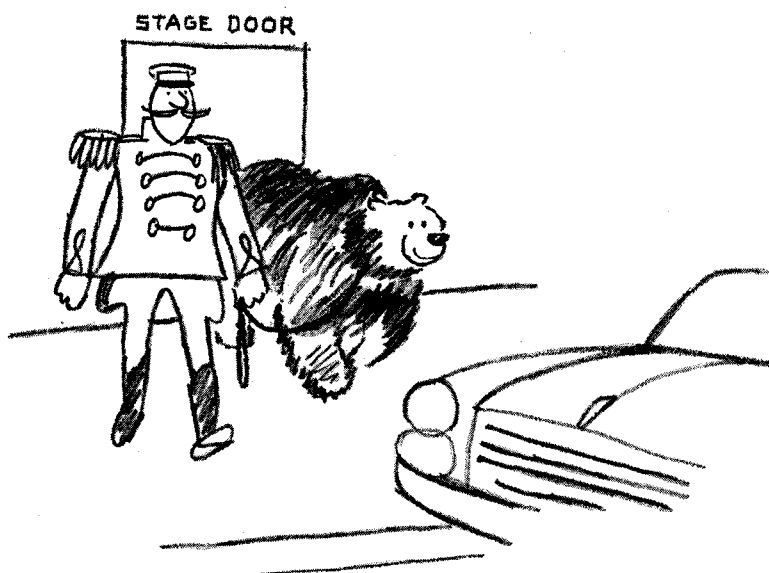
The way she was dressed and the social thing she was embodying at a given moment affected the way she kissed me: it was obviously a different kiss you got from the sore-footed peasant girl-woman relaxing at home than you got from the dressed-up-and-with-diamonds-lady-on-her-way-to-a-dinner-party, and it amused her that you preferred the kiss of one to that of the other—of the less sincere and more

abstracted one to the more serious one, for instance. She was openly businesslike about having to have so many styles; she had or professed or displayed an overtly self-conscious, heated, ironic glamour in the years when I first knew her: *I get things done; I'm someone people fall in love with*; and then a glance asked, *Are you hooked?*

Her features were good—regular and unstylized. The quality of her particular looks was discreet but sultry, hot and soft, midnight-pallor-and-darkness. Suggestive, I'm not sure of what. Romance. Passion. Knowing-how-to-have-a-good-time. Watch-out-I'm-temperamental-and-a-power. This was all set off socially, when she was dressed up, by a self-conscious sense of humor that she adopted and by a Middle Western, taut, contingent politeness that changed like her humor according to the circumstances of the moment and the rank of whoever she was with and how much she wanted to impress them.

When I first knew her, she was thirty-three years old: she told everyone she was thirty-one. And then thirty-four years old was what she was. And thirty-five. The years she had "under her belt" (she said that) kept getting added on to.

I knew her differently from any way that she spoke of herself—I knew of her in a dreamlike or isolated or inward way: or from outside, as just a person but one who acted out being the-friendliest-woman-imaginable-although-I-am-pretty, and who acted out being tormented and unhappy, and with a defiant, parochial status of being a local woman of undeniable romance and glamour. She was someone I saw every day, a mother, a person, who went out visiting.



Momma sometimes claimed she'd invented her good looks and it was hard work and required "nerve": sometimes she said she just happened to be good-looking. She couldn't make up her mind whether she wanted to be thought of as lucky or clever. The way she stood, dressed, smiled served to remind people of her good looks: Why is that woman holding her head to one side? Oh, she's very pretty, isn't she?

"I get away with it—I know how to get away with it," she said.

She had a temperamentally grandiose, genuinely grand, if local, set of moods that had to do with her "getting the most out of" (her phrase) her looks "while they last" (also her phrase), and she had a sly, obstinate, sort of crazy set of moods, inside a thing of I-am-a-prophetess: I-am-crazy-but-I-know-things-and-I-ought-to-be-listened-to.

Momma was honest, but in different ways every few minutes, depending on circumstances and who she was with and her mood. She also lied, but rarely with absolute guile—when she lied, it was more a thing of *take it or leave it*.

She always said, "Women have terrible

lives," but her tone was different depending on her age. There was a harem smell about her always—she'd never stepped outside the protection of her family and then of her husband—and the harem smell had a tinge of connivance, shadows, and often complaint: it was in her tones of voice, in the varying degrees of defiance or of boastfulness or of seduction in her speaking voice. The complaint went from mild, almost languorous, to maenad-savage, to I-would-kill-you-if-I-could-if-I-could-get-away-with-it. She would say, "No one can force me

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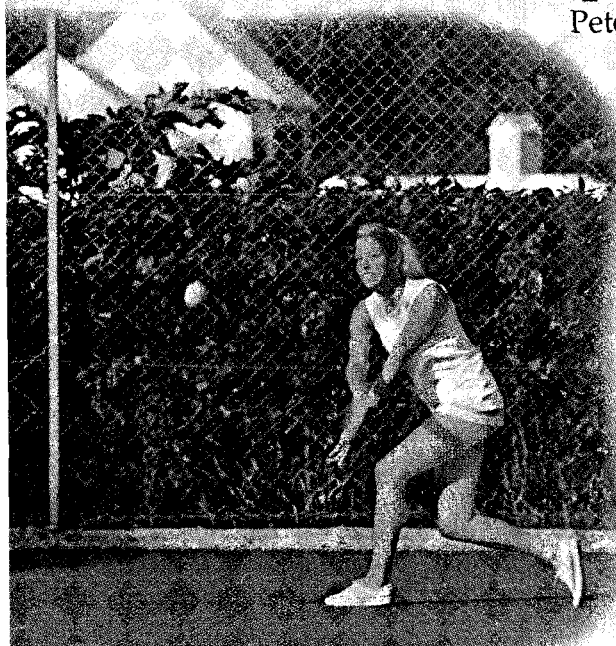
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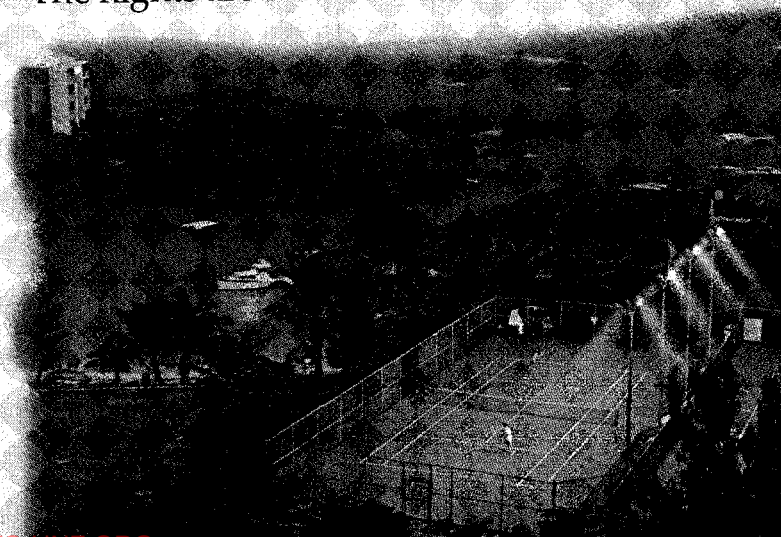
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to do anything." She would give warning that she was not a mere toy by remarking with quaint good humor or with wild-eyed, lunatic temper, "I have a lot of say-so in this town."

She never claimed logical rigor, only intelligence. She said, "No one taught me how to think—I had to teach myself," and besides her sense of life was made up of illogicalities and inconsistencies: she would say, "Everything's a big joke, if you ask me," and "The joke is nothing's a joke—you can't let anything pass."

She built a great deal of her public and private politics on having her unhappiness matter: she would be happy, as a social gesture, as a form of flattery to you. Sometimes she would refuse to be unhappy in order to claim that defeat was impossible for her. Sometimes defeat was the only idea she wanted people to have of her—that she failed and failed and failed and had to be given help at once—help or forgiveness.

"I'm queen of this little town," she'd say musingly, or threateningly, or as a joke, or as a cruel joke on herself: I couldn't tell when I was a child; and in memory she seems always to be feeling at least two emotions when she says it—maybe three, counting boredom. (She also expressed disappointment in herself for not "trying my luck in a big city.")

She had a hipshot stance and walk, very daring. She was quick—quick and ruthless in style of movement and of mind—but sometimes memory reduces her walk to a wind-pressed slow motion, with her movements bunching her body in soft self-clappings and then wicked, partly inhibited openings out, or archings, to the public view.... People stared at her: children. Dogs barked at her—at the dramatic disturbance she threw out into the air. She said, "All my life, people kowtowed to me because of my looks—and, if you'll pardon me for boasting, my brains—it was all a lot of foolishness, if you ask me—it was all—what's the word—superficial."

She told me, "I was always the beauty of the household.... One thing I'll say for my mother: she let me be my father's favorite—she never fought me for him."

Of her own daughter she said, "I was lucky—it means a lot to a girl: let Nonie have her turn." That is, she let Nonie, my sister, be close to Daddy. Daddy couldn't always get along with Nonie, and Momma often was bored with Daddy, so it was funny to try to figure out the generosity involved. Nonie was eleven years older than I was.

Momma gave me the impression that in her there were certain serious purposes, earnest errands, life-and-death projects, charities that concerned whole lives, serious plots, finaglings about money that occupied her mind. Also, there were certain serious gloomy honesties in her, a pessimism, and dark insights into people which served as a form of somewhat lazy omniscience ("No one's *really* nice," she would say), and a dark forgiveness and wonder which a child oughtn't to know about, so she would say to me at times, "Don't pay attention to me. Go away now—live your own life." (Sometimes I would obey that injunction.)

She was said to have helped cause my real mother's death—by breaking her spirit when she was ill, by enticing my affections from my real mother: "You were your mother's only reason to live." (Leila said to me once, "The one thing I'm afraid about is what I did to your mother.") And then she had her public prettiness—sort of interrupting and dominating everything with *All right, now all hands waver toward me—all eyes light on me—now stop—don't touch me—oh all right, touch me a little—now go back—I don't know—I have to laugh—my God, what a mess....*

Her particular style of moral defiance was that of a Jewess, I think, but she overlaid that, for the sake of appearances, with an imitation of certain small-town Protestant women who arrogated social power and guiltlessness to themselves and the right to ascribe guilt. Momma never managed the latter; the closest she could come to it was the exposé: "The truth is—if you ask—me—"

I would guess her defiance began with her snubbing the Jewish principle that a woman ought not be the occasion of anyone else's sinning. She said, "I'm no goody-goody; I don't like goody-goodies; no goody-goody can get along with me.... I don't put myself in a special category—I'm not a saint—that's why I've always been

popular—that's why men come to me for advice."

(Sometimes she said, "They come to me for advice because I have nice eyes.")

She had many modes of cliché; one of the most common patterns of her speech was a spiel—she liked to make new friends, to seduce and re-seduce and re-re-seduce someone (often she seemed to alienate people in order to have the game, the hunt of re-seducing them—or of seeing what she *could get away with*: another big interest of hers that blotted out and got mixed up with other things in her); the spiel implied *I know the sort of person you are, I don't mind, you can't fool me much and there's no reason you should, I'm not a big blamer, you don't have to lie to me, so why don't you tell me the truth, I'm not a child, tell me the truth and then we'll know where we stand, come on, trust me, include me in—look, you don't have to respect me, I'm just like you, I'm on your side, you can count on me to understand what it takes to get along in life*—it was this that was the center of her being seductive....

Her being a good sport, her energy, her looks, and her obvious respectability, her care for being protected, for getting away with fraud, added up to a surprising impression of militant aristocracy, one of personal quality, of open, successful greed, rank, and mercilessness.

SHE was very conservative and yet she encouraged everyone—men, women, children—to rebel. "Be yourself," she'd say. "You'd be amazed at what people will put up with."

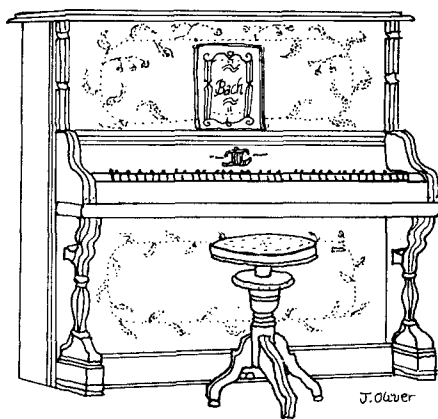
She said, "Plain people have to lie to themselves all the time, but I was never plain—I know what the truth is—I know what I know—I can't help what I know."

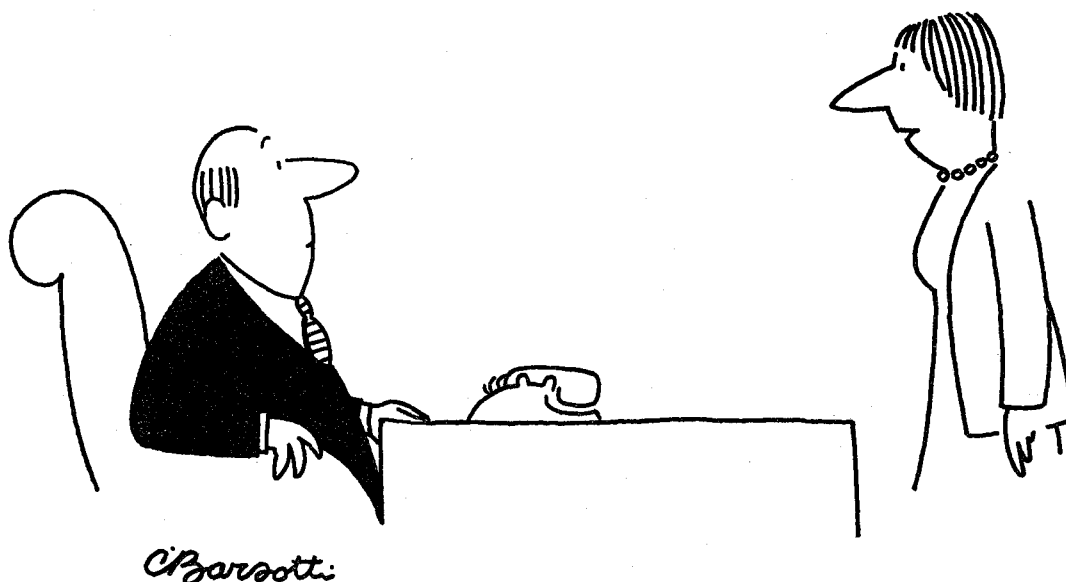
(Other women said, "She's not as attractive as she thinks she is—she puts up a good front and she gets away with it.")

She said, "Frankly, I want to be the real winner—all the time—I try to give everybody their money's worth.... But in the end, I want to win. I don't think taking a back seat to someone is any fun—ha-ha."

Sometimes she seemed to be mysteriously at a focus of heat, at a point of convergence of rays, on purpose, as if she demanded such heat as a matter of personal quality, a measure of her status as a woman; warmth, heat—like being wrapped in sables or spotlights or infatuations.

She said of independent women—





"Mr. Willoughby, the leaders of the Stop Willoughby Committee are here to see you."

many of whom she liked and visited and had visit her—"They live like prostitutes." That is, they had no protection, no helplessness: they weren't *given* things. In a year or two, when Daddy gets mad at me, he will say, "You're not fit to live with decent people," and "You're a little *whore*!" He means I'm too tough and independent to deserve a *home*.

Momma says to her daughter, "You're not likable and you hate me, but I'll see to it you always have a *home*—give me credit for something—I'll see to it you always have that backing. . . ."

When Daddy said I was a whore, he meant I didn't deserve to be given things.

Momma said, "I'm an executive by nature." That is, she always wanted other people to do things she told them to do, she handed out responsibility. She would say to Nonie, "Don't push me too far or I'll make real trouble for you—" She never bothered confronting Nonie head on. "Live and let live is my motto—if Nonie wants to be stupid, let her—she'll learn—it's up to her—her husband will teach her, old age will teach her, my mother learned a lot when she got old." She would say, "Let the school handle her without coming to me—I have better fish to fry." She will try to charm people into doing things for Nonie or she'll nag them into it, particularly Daddy: "You think I like doing this—I'm not doing it for myself, S.L."

Momma will say, "I can't do it, my hands are tied, people don't trust me, because of my looks."

And: "I can't afford to get in-

debted—they take advantage of me as it is."

(Daddy will say, "You give me no rest." Momma will say, "There are things I have to do—things are expected of me, S.L.")

"No one can teach you how to live if you're an outstanding person," Momma said. "You have to find out for yourself and hope it's the right thing."

She said, "Being married to me makes S.L. someone in this little town: I'm S.L.'s recommendation—I don't mean to toot my own horn, but I'm somebody around here—the truth is the truth."

If she is angry and no one placates her sufficiently, she becomes large and sloppy with threat, sort of a don't-think-I'm-a-shy-lovely-woman-who's-afraid-to-hate-and-make-a-mess.

When we are at the shopping center, people hurry over to her to speak to her. When she steps out our front door, neighbors call her name; they start to trot toward her.

She says, "They want to make a little time with me."

She said to me, "If people only knew how little they offer and how much they ask when they have a crush on you, they wouldn't be so surprised they have only themselves to blame for how they get treated—I want you to listen to me: I have a lot to teach you, even if you are a boy."

She plays no sports. She is very intense; her heartbeat, unexercised, is always, even when she is sitting down, rapid and huffy, intense: it sounds like muffled hammer blows: when her heart pounds, it means she is angry

and will lecture us; people say she has "a bad mouth." Perhaps she is made angry by too many things—although often she is angered by something and hides it and then shows anger over the next thing that happens, whatever it is. She likes really only very cool people—good gamblers, tough, respectable, or semi-reputable, or disreputable men and women who get their own way and are careful and distant toward emotion, who laugh at it, and who are dogged and who "accomplish" things: people who can fool other people and can "get their own way" and can be patient, hiding any tremor of ignorance, or seeming to, within the confines of what they know "for a certainty."

They can calm her down, such people: she has an addiction to people of that sort; but when she is with them she maneuvers in much the same way she does with other people—she does not want to fall into their hands; she wants to be the winner with them too.

She likes Daddy's bland ruralness and egoism, but he is too humid—his looks too: his coolness lies next to a heat in him: she pities him.

When she is not in the presence of calm people, if she isn't near someone who damps her down (someone probably cruel and egocentric and compulsive in his or her calmness), then Momma's momentum, her trajectory, her sultriness go more and more awry. "I don't know anyone worth it, to test myself against!" she will cry: in her shapeliness and restlessness and quickness of speech and her puffed-out added-on glamour-importance of being pretty and in her thirties, she is short of breath often unless she is sitting still and is all dressed up.

She sits down passionately: she starts slowly or languorously and then she gets bored and throws herself backward or falls with a proud carelessness.

She used to say, "I still have my looks—I haven't lost my nerve."

Her hair was shiny and long; she had a widow's peak, soft white skin, high arched eyebrows (the shape of which she changed daily), a direct look, which, if you kneeled on the couch and peered into her eyes, you saw wasn't there at all: her eyes were unreadable, murky, filled with purposeful teasing, with veils, baffles, a peculiar maze or lightlessness behind a surface clarity—a tumult on an ill-lit stage where an

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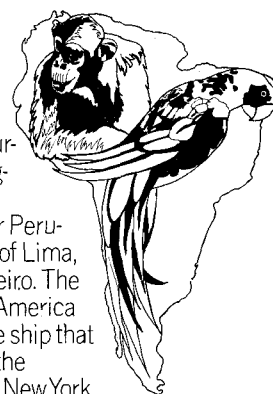
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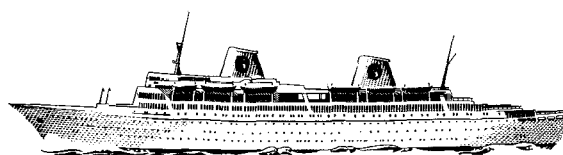
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actress with a rifle occasionally assassinated this one or that one in the audience but where the lights never came up: the scene never was explained.

She and Daddy both said of her when she was dressed up that she was "on the rampage" or "on the war-path."

She says sensitive people are "obnoxious—all they care about is their feelings; they don't give a damn about your feelings."

She said, "Women don't have good lives," and "It's only interesting to be a woman."

She says she is smarter than Daddy and that "the wrong things are in books—what's in books doesn't help someone like me—I want to do something in life, I want to do something with my life." She says, "Anyway, I have no time to read."

Momma in sunlight scowls usually and squints and proposes temperament to distract people from what is happening to her face year by year—the knowledge, the lines maybe; she proposes herself restlessly as an object and a force.

By the time she is thirty-five, she is swifter and more given to assertion, and she outrageously and easily shows hate—even to me: "You dropped your napkin? Well, I'm not going to pick it up. I'm going out of my mind with you; I can't stand it; you have to eat without a napkin now; go ahead, get food all over yourself so everyone that thinks you're so wonderful can see what a pig you are—I'm tired of being your nursemaid and your hairdresser and public-relations man—" I stare at her when she's like that—and sometimes I laugh. Or I stick out my tongue at her. I have some secret with her—I don't know what it is—but the matter of that secret comes up suffocatingly from time to time.

She was taut and rusty with temper more and more, sometimes like a shrieking bird with dusty feathers or, more lightly, like a used and frail paper kite with thin wooden struts on a blowy, gray day, crackling and groaning in the wind that pushes at it.

She would say of me, "He gives me reason to like him—he's the only one who doesn't blame me."

Her defiance grew dark and muffled, and more violent, I think.

She's not too honorable. So her feelings for me are amusing, unreliable; she is not without a kind of honor; and so, although I do not trust her, there is some way in which I trust her more than I do anyone else—which is maybe sad, maybe not sad.

She was the only one of the people I knew who did not care what I thought, who did not insist that my mind had to be a certain sort of thing. She said, "Plain people don't know how to leave anyone alone."

And: "Most people are afraid of being lonesome—that was never my problem."

She said, "My looks are going now—I'm boring to look at. Frankly, I'm not sorry; I'm not going to do anything to keep my looks—they go, they go—I had a run for my money—I never liked it—I want to be a woman who's important to other women now—women will take me more seriously now that I'm a little older—I'm more sure of myself. . . . To tell you the truth, I don't mean to boast about my looks, but the whole time I was young and good-looking, if I say so myself—but it's foolish to talk about it—but it always made me a little sick

to my stomach. . . . I'm not a bad person, you know: people can say what they like about me; jealousy is not exactly rare; but I'm not bad, as people go."

"Leila," some woman would say, "you have a lot of sense—a lot of sense—I have to hand it to you, I have to admire the way you look at things."

"Well, no matter what people say, looks and brains go together—people talk to you—I was always good at talking to people—you get a chance to learn that way. I don't like to boast, but I will say

I don't know anyone who knows as much about life as I do. Oh, I don't say I know it all: you, as well as anyone, can back me up; I go to a lot of people, a lot of people, for advice; I know what I don't know; but I know about life—I had a lot of it. . . . I intend to teach what I know—to my children. . . . Is it too dark in here for you? You want me to turn on another lamp? I would like to help people with what I know."

And: "If I had a choice between ten million dollars and being president of the Jewish Charity League, I

wouldn't hesitate. If women—smart women, who do something in the world—women who know me—if they respect me enough to elect me treasurer—which means, as we all know, that I'll be president then in two years—I would feel that made my life worthwhile. . . ."

HER face became only slightly looser: it became prettier maybe: but it fell, if I may say it like this, outside history now.

She burned all the photographs of herself.

She had been three years old and five and sixteen and twenty-five. Now there was no documentary evidence of any of it.

She said, "There's a time to flirt and a time to stop."

She said, "S.L., let's move to—" She named a suburb, closer to the nearby city. She said, "I don't want to grow old in the same town I grew up in."

She said to me once, "I knew the right time to leave—go back there and ask anyone, and they'll tell you how good-looking I was. They remember. They never saw me later." And: "I don't like people's eyes—I don't like looking at their eyes—or their eyes looking at me. . . . Listen to me: people aren't nice; maybe they're nice to you when you're a child, but if you're smart you won't trust them."

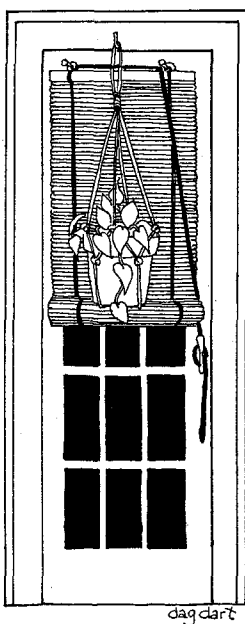
She said, "I've never been the one who asked."

And: "I don't care what I look like—so long as my life is interesting—and I have a very interesting life."

And: "I know what age I am—I adopted this child because I knew S.L. needed someone to admire—Nonie was fat and was going through a very bad phase. . . . I wonder why they call the Devil the Lord of the Flies. I was itchy when I was young—I had a very good time—nothing is as important as being good-looking: if you were never good-looking, then you don't know what life is really like—you don't know what life is all about—still, I for one am glad to get off that merry-go-round—it was a lot of work, believe me, and you have to take a lot of disrespect from everyone."

She had had the immediate secular importance of someone who had entry to "important" men who were perhaps obsessed with her: their importance had been hers to some extent; she had been like a travelling court, the travelling court of a possibly illegitimate sovereign.

"Hearts used to beat faster," she said



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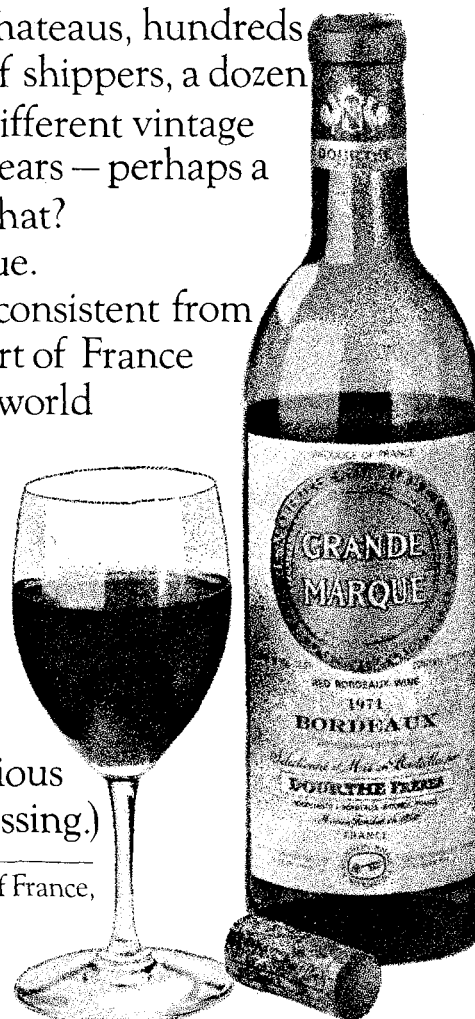
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ironically, "when I was around. . . ." She said, "Well, why not? I could do things for people!"

The physical thing for her was always a mixture of stink, confusion, and privilege, of power and secrecy and criminality—and acceptable, like so much else. I mean she accepted her exclusion—perhaps more than she had to. She said, "It's wrong of S.L. to want me now—he's bald and I'm not young: I'm his wife—he ought to know better—ha-ha."

It had always been a matter of crimes, of men who shouldn't have loved her, and who she said no to, men who were too old or were not respectable or who were her brothers. She had a lonely, steady, circumambient darkness, an aureole of sin that was also a floating nimbus of surprise at the unexpectedness of having people desire her.

What is desire worth?

Then her slyness, her bluff of taking desire for granted, all that stuff that she did to increase her leverage—what was *that* worth?

Her self-consciousness when she was young had been fairly secret or ironic but now she made it open: "I stopped playing dumb—people always get a shock when they find out I'm not a simpleton . . . when they see I know what I'm doing. . . ."

It had been that people who had visitors from out of town brought them to our house, and Momma would receive them; toward the end, if she thought she didn't look good she'd haul me out, display me: she'd assume the sultry, ironic I-don't-care-about-my-looks-I'm-getting-older-I'm-the-mother-of-this-boy role.

I mimicked her arrogance, but I was, by nature, different from her, and male.

SHE had helped Daddy and two of her brothers in their businesses; she'd meddled in politics.

Her looks, her disposition had given her some power over the people around her, many of them—a power that she had never been sure of and that had always been beyond her intellectual powers to be clear about.

"If you're a certain type, some people have to like you—" She had theories like that: she wasn't sure; it had been that she'd get overexcited, very heated, if they did like her. She knew that infatuation made people silly, and sometimes cruel, and dangerous.

Her power had never been absolute, and a power that is not always there, that is not always noticeable, is not easy to define to one's self; and

since it operates oddly, in silence, it is a source of corruption (and occasionally of amusement). It is *black magic*, *haste*, *what-have-you*. Sometimes it seemed never to have been there: "No one except S.L. ever changed his life because of me—they never gave me anything of their own that they valued, so what did their liking me mean?" (But they had listened to her and given her things, and helped her and S.L. make money.) "I ask you that; I always had to be the one to give everything—I'd rather people disliked me, to be frank about it."

Tyranny is a crime in a state, but in a woman, intellectually, it simply means she insists she is right; emotionally, it means she is loved. In my mother's case, it was part of her mind's stumbling after the world. She was so unsure of her powers of seduction by the time I was adopted that she'd often dress up and comb her hair especially and wear perfume and a necklace to play with me.

When I was very young, she took me to see my real mother, who was ill and smelled like someone very ill, while Leila was in a dress that smelled good and she wore her daytime diamonds, and the child was more comfortable with her than with his mother; and another woman who was there said, thirty years later, "I thought it was terrible to see that—I could never stand Leila after that—she understood nothing about people's feelings—she was a selfish woman—no one

ever owed her a thing, if you ask me."

Momma said, "The world's not fair, but I don't see what good complaining does."

(Daddy said, "You never stop complaining.")

It is assumed older women know a great deal, including how to act, but it's funny, because few people ask their advice or imitate the way older women behave, and a lot of older women seem crazy and desperate.

Just a little while before, a year or two earlier, Momma's advice, intrigues, despairs had been considered interesting. There had been an intense narrative interest about her life. Part of that came from her audience's forgiving her everything she did because she was *public*. Things were not like that now.

Now she really had to know things. Now it was tactically sound not to expect to get away with anything at all. Now when people stared at her, it was as if they were like casual hoodlums toward her, whereas before they'd been like children of friends of her parents, they'd had that politeness and forbearance toward her. . . .

Daddy said she'd always been angry. I could never tell if her anger came from the way she was treated or if she had a natural aptitude for anger and now had an excuse. Perhaps part of her anger had always been part of her preparing to be older. She became so ferociously egoistic that those of us who watched her were cut off from her, were no longer her allies, were no longer implicated, minute by minute, in what she did, in having to hope she was happy because she was so pretty and she was ours to boot.

Perhaps we were competitive and glad to escape from her power and thievish toward the rights she'd once had and which could be ours if we could take and hold them. She handled badly what was happening to her. She rubbed your face in her moods, in part so she could feel the full extent of her problem. By making very clear to herself your impatience with her and exaggerating it, she imprinted the real situation on her nerves and looked at it, and felt it more: this was one way she was alive.

But it made you her enemy, her competitor. . . . Her moods were sometimes heavy now like Daddy's, masculine. Her sense of things wasn't young; it wasn't airy—or generous.

You could see how different she was in the way she walked, or just by looking into her face. Her self-consciousness had grown so that if you were me and got her attention you were looked at by



a pair of eyes in a face of I-am-this-woman-now.

She came to conclusions every day about I-am-this-woman-now—and then she'd change her mind; and through that variety her attention would be directed at me—at anyone.

Part of what she had been was careless, or at least uncaring much of the time about what people thought about her and about what she did, and now she was enraged at having to worry about who she was.

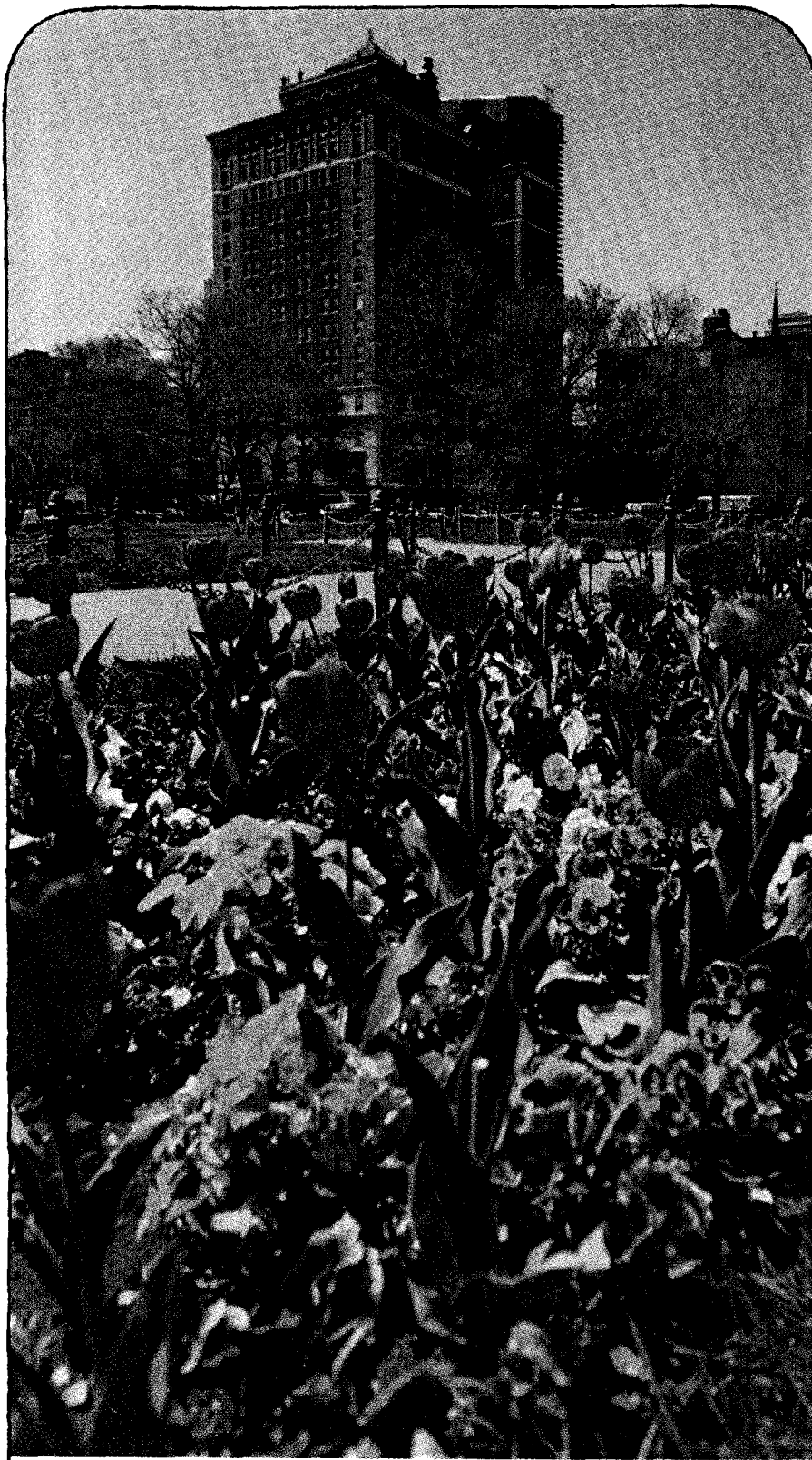
By the time I started to speak, to enter on the difficulties of ideas uttered and trafficked in, Momma, like everyone else, often mentioned that she was *getting older*.

I REMEMBER Momma going on diets, changing her hairdos, not desperately but sighingly, using her mind, her wits; she was trying to be what she'd more or less casually planned for herself for when her "bloom" went, which was to be "smart," angular, knowing, stylish, *older* (older and *striking*—strike, smite, deal a blow), to gain a new say-so to match the one she had lost.

She was not at all ill-natured when she worked on herself, but when it turned out her looks didn't have the possibility of being modish she became moody, even quite wild with moods. Thin, her body was insignificant, not electrically sexual or stylish; and her face, bony, was not distinguished and romantic but was openly full of temperament—an overused face, ambitious, hot, restless: it looked bad-tempered even when she smiled. She said once, "One of the tragedies of my life was that I couldn't be chic—I didn't have the bones. I would have known how to use it, too—believe me—if I'd had the chance, but I didn't have it." Sigh. "I had to make do with what I had."

Daddy said she was "a killer," that she turned "murderous." She got rid of Anne Marie, my nurse—I was pretty dependent on Anne Marie. Once Anne Marie was gone, Daddy found the house unpleasant and agreed to move to the suburb Momma wanted to live in. No one told me Anne Marie was leaving: one day she was gone. "Act like a man," Momma said to me.

She told one of her brothers he was "an oily fool" and another that he was "an ignorant fool"—she did it in a polite voice; she didn't mean "to drive them away—I want them to know I'm someone they have to consider; I protect them from looking like fools." But she did drive them



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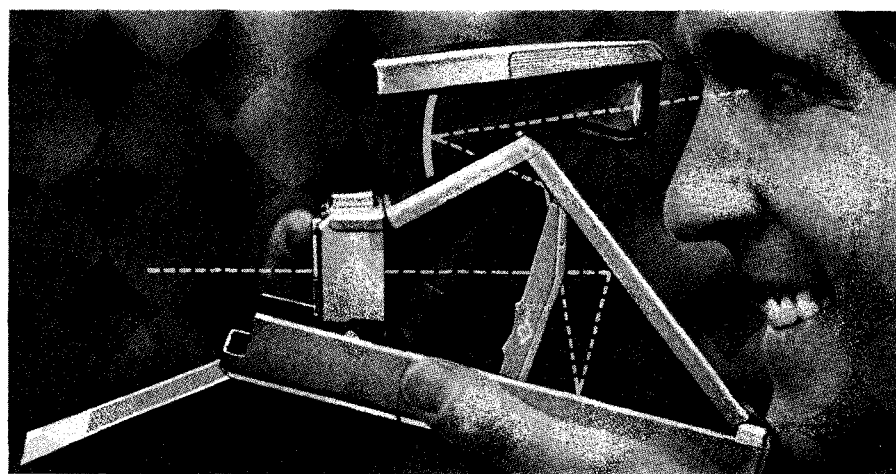


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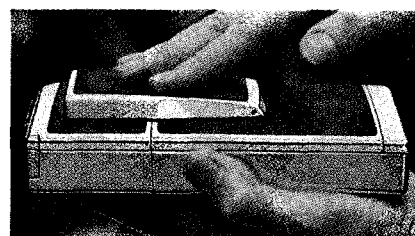
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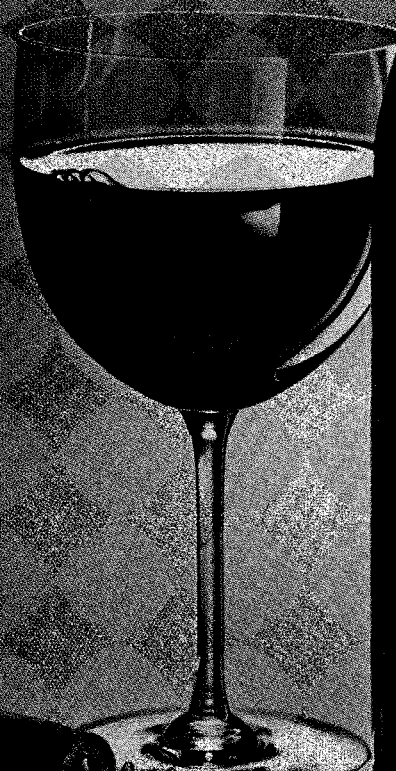
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the more we remain
the same.



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away: they began to avoid her. Her looks, with care, could have a local haute-bourgeoise, slightly plump prettiness, with a delicate aging romance to them, or a neat, serene, lyrical and calm middle-aged prettiness, but nothing youthful or electrifying.

I remember periods off and on when she would suddenly adopt a spy lady's glamour, an old expert's glamour, slinky and instructed, and she would do it whether she was plump or not: she took to furs, hats that shaded her face. She did it *frankly* as an aging woman—"I'm at the age for overdressing: I have to strike while the iron is hot," she'd say with a sarcasm that somehow broke off or shaded into a strangely deep resignation, almost a placidity, a placidity of storminess so you had to blink, confused about how fierce she was being at the moment.

She said she needed money for beauty parlors, for clothes, for entertaining: "It costs a lot more when you get older just to keep up. . . ." Actually, she was climbing a little higher socially: she was bolder, pushier in a way. She would be furious about my pleasures—sports, for instance—but she wouldn't raise her voice: she would mock in a resigned voice, and then forbid me wearily, boredly to take sports seriously. I fought her, and she'd back up into shadows and hold off, sort of; but she'd think of errands, household duties for me to do to keep me from my games—she wanted to run everything and everyone: she ran Daddy's business. But in mood, in tone, in manner, she was *always* elegiac.

Her walk changed—it changed a lot; it became fluffy and more elegant; but in a year or two more it became purposeful, frightening, and knowing, a stalking as if she were Fate (she said, "I'm a very conceited woman, I admit it"). When I walked next to her, sometimes it was like being next to granite blocks tumbling slowly in melodramatic little avalanches. It was strange to me as a child when she changed. I used to laugh, inwardly but outwardly too, briefly, shocked or—something: amused: and she would say, "You don't recognize me? You think I've made a mistake? I'm not sure I like the way I look today myself." When she walked hipshot, it was not like before at all: now it was metronomic, now demanding; the shiftings of her body tended to be comic or comic-lyrical, startling and obvious (elegiac sexuality is comic, I suppose); for daytime *functions*, she was more and more careful to be girdled and serene.

There was a period of about two

years when she would complain—jokingly—about getting older: “I *used* to be good-looking,” she would say; she would speak to other women of the loosening of the skin of her arms and of her neck; she would say to a man who was complimentary, “Oh, I’m getting past all that, Herb; we all are.” She said to people—she said it to herself, as if to herself; I would be there, sitting on the edge of her bed, swinging my legs, listening—“I want to grow old well; it’s a job like any other—it’s something you figure out.” She was competitive about it; she meant to do it better than anyone else.

People talked to her differently; they talked of their own affairs differently, not as if to a sibyl, not darkly and haltingly and embarrassedly or with a rush; they took their time; they assumed she had to be “charming” (her whole social manner was more fluid, more polite, more outgoing, a serene and happy, resigned, semi-retired woman); she listened with what seemed a calm attentiveness. She was supposed to. She was supposed to make up for her age by a seductiveness of attention and of concern for them, for their interests: she said in private, “They’re getting even with me now—I don’t blame them—I took advantage of everyone for years—I like thinking of it now.” (Sometimes she said, “I don’t like thinking of how selfish I was—I thought I owned everything. I was a terrible fool. I laid the wrong foundations.”) She said, “I knew what was coming—I used my time well—I only wish I’d taken more advantage of people...” She had periods now of what seemed true kindness, of a wish to nurture others, of an interest in other people’s sadness—Daddy’s or Nonie’s or mine; but that was part of wanting to tell us what to do and of punishing us if we didn’t listen to her and do what she told us all the time; I resisted—one did resist her with a kind of guerrilla evasiveness—and she was grand, a full army, soft-bodied, carefully got up, or sometimes now, messy and at-home, her full age, brown-lipped, hanging skin, masculine and strong-looking but tired and depressed, with sudden spurts of savagery. She rarely bothered with sarcasm; she attacked directly—my father in this fashion: “You’re dumb—you were always dumb—everyone knows you’re dumb—why don’t you grow up and face it, S.L.?” She said it almost wearily, looking up at him, without personal heat, with the heat of a rage too weary to become hysterical.

He said, “You’ve got a terrible

mouth on you—you’re a terrible woman.” He said, “We’re getting older—the best is yet to be.”

“God, you’re a fool,” she said.

Her charities increased in number: she paid for them out of money meant for other things; she liked it that the household was in financial disarray. Nonie, cheated of clothes and allowances, screamed and threw tantrums; Momma tried to buy her off with other things: Momma thought “making sacrifices for a daughter is cheap—it’s what women do who have no lives of their own.” But sometimes she would make a big to-do of making sacrifices for Nonie, a sort of I-am-being-a-mother-now-and-I-want-credit-for-it. Really, her temper grew worse and worse, more impatient and intractable. She ascribed everything she did to self-sacrifice—as in her charities, in *keeping up appearances*, in *running the family*: it was for our sakes—“certainly not for my sake: I don’t get anything out of it, let me assure you.” She seemed to imply that only running away from home could have saved her life and could have been amusing. That or suicide or lunacy—any of the three would have been *amusing*. In her attacks on people, she said things that had been said before *in jest* and she said them again in a grating, direct, naked voice, or politely, with her face dragged down by gravity, or softly, flirtatiously, sort of idly threatening; and Daddy would twitch and say to her that she was “an awful woman—you come straight from Hell—you’re a curse...” When she attacked me, I laughed as I did when she changed her appearance: look-at-what-Momma-is-doing-now. Her ferocity was like the current superabundance of her underwear (she’d always worn, oh, *less* before) or her new smells (she smelled more grainy—granular, I should say). The laugh bordered on horror and on delight—the horror of seeing a dead

bird, of seeing Momma-get-into-trouble (it didn’t take much vision to realize there’d be trouble for her soon when she acted like this), of having things go really rotten, and of being freed from loving her, of being turned loose as for a recess; the delight came from the same things and was ambiguous and despairing as well. I still loved her a lot but chiefly when I didn’t see her, when I was out of the house, or when she was talking to someone else; when she talked to me, I resisted, I became a knot and twist of resistance, an outward expression of an inner judgment of her as she-is-impossible.

Her sense of self-sacrifice was so great that she felt it right to do anything at all with unparalleled emotional extravagance in the way of making demands, of temper, of pull-the-temple-down-to-hell-with-you-my-rage-is-my-beauty-now. She had puffs of swiftness and remorselessness—as a pretty woman—moth-y, puff-ish, yet fatal. And when people were angry or put off and retreated from her, they also laughed at her in a funny way: in a sense, all traffic between her and everyone had been rerouted.

Daddy was gently, obdurately triumphant—even when she managed to depress him and scare him and make him helpless; he had only two moods at home, really-on-top-of-the-world and then nervous-breakdown, in which he’d lurk in his bedroom or dressing room and then he’d *hst* at me to call me in to give him a hug to keep him company just as in comic movies about haridans, or in comic novels. What was odd was that Nonie would take his side in words—“You’re terrible to Daddy,” she would say to Momma—but she would ignore him or pick at him when he was defeated: she would ask him for money, which depressed him.

He was often lost and he would hum disconsolately to himself; he took to rebuilding clocks and model cars—in the bedroom.

But even then he smiled a lot to himself—as if he had won out. His looks had changed too but he was still physically glamorous; he was, by and large, indulgent toward Momma. She hated that, I think.

She said, “I have to hold my head and my shoulders right or I get terrible lines.” You could see how tired she was after a few hours of “being presentable to every Tom, Dick, and Harry who comes down the pike.” If she relaxes, she looks—ill-natured, remote, partly erased. When she pulls



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herself together, she is a vaguely stunning cripple, a matron.

Going out in the evening, after giving Daddy some sort of tongue-lashing or gibing at him while they dressed, she would adopt an I-have-lived - I'm - happy - to - be - the - age - I - am - all - storms - are - over - I - am - Aging - Loveliness - Itself - Sweet - Experience - turned - into - a - sheer - perfume - of - knowledge - all - for - you glamour. To her sweetly serene public matronliness she would add this aura of romance: *there - is - still - time - for - one - last - tragically - passionate - and - important - communication - to - pass - between-us.*

I'm not sure she meant it—it was just a bargaining do-jigger. And the quality of it was sometimes that of a joke, a joke she played purposefully and satirically on you and on herself but in a way that said *you're-a-fool-and - I'm-not-and - you're-being-a-fool-while - I-am-not-is - one-of-the - great-pleasures - of - my - aging - womanhood.*

Sometimes it had a vaguely churchly, sermonish quality of it's-over-for-us-now-don't-you-realize-that. And: *let - us - repent - in - this - twilight - you - go - first - you - need - repentance - more-than-I-do.*

For daytime things, for women, she used a friendlier form of that—more conspiratorial, more obviously lonely, a daytime version.

There were times when it was so noticeable that she'd lost a lot that I would avert my gaze as if from nudity. She often ruined conversations now by taking chances that no one forgave her for anymore—and then, too, her charm, when she was charming, was so practiced it was like a deformity of spirit; and her alertness was awful, since it was incomplete and was like that of a bird which did not speak a human language: I mean she was so fascinated by her situation, she so extended it as being the chief ground of existence that she didn't see your mood, really, or your youth, if you were a child, as I was. She made sweeping entrances into a room still and reproached salespeople or offered sudden friendship to them, but it was wrong now, the way she did it. She would then become sour, poised over resignation about this but anxious to be smart or to get even for it—to be smart about it. Some days, she looks young, and then she dresses up to it, laughs brilliantly: she seems oddly at home and yet uneasy on that ground which will, after all, cave in under her as soon as her tired-

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ness grows, like a fungus, on her face.

She says with finality that it is humiliating to pass as young anymore.

She romanticizes or exaggerates or sees in an odd perspective the strength and resilience and happiness of being young.

She talked about refusing sex with Daddy. She talked about it in front of company, in front of Nonie and me: "We're past all that, S.L.—our skin hangs. . . ."

Supposing that he'd used to come at her like some animal occupied by a god momentarily, and there she was, more or less gleaming in the dark, with the residual, supine, slyly and softly complete good looks that had drawn him to her in the first place: supposing she, lazily, from inside her beauty, embarrassed at first, and then with experience, a limited experience, setting herself to enclose and elaborately swallow his excitement and then snuff it out into the darkness of comfort, of oblivion: perhaps she had always buried his passion within the ground of her pride, in a great mausoleum of pride.

Perhaps she had no interest in tenderness, in the clever knowingness of an embrace set in the different key of being older: she only liked the earlier glory and savagery of attraction. She may have wanted to punish him. She may have wanted to break off before she was led into servicing him, into wanting him more than he wanted her.

I had entry to her mind, to the outside porches and some of the inner rooms of her mind—but only at moments. Often, she hid herself from me: "There are some things that aren't fit for a child."

She didn't count on my liking her.

Often, I can see the nerve gathering in her—the sense of umbrage at her luck, a gathering of willful unholliness, or of righteousness mixed with the criminal thing: she gathers herself together and then flares out into a heavy middle-aged leap of being outrageous, *impossible*, flabbergasting, psychologically or ideologically, as once she'd been physically flabbergasting, overwhelming *everyone*. . . .

I think people had expected her to be a better loser.

They were titillated—amused—horrified—severely displeased—saddened that she was middle-aged in *that* style. Partly her middle-aged replacing of one power by another seemed like a horror because the later power seemed even more unearned than the earlier one—or was earned only by the earlier one's having been a self-sacrifice or a right due her; I mean none of it

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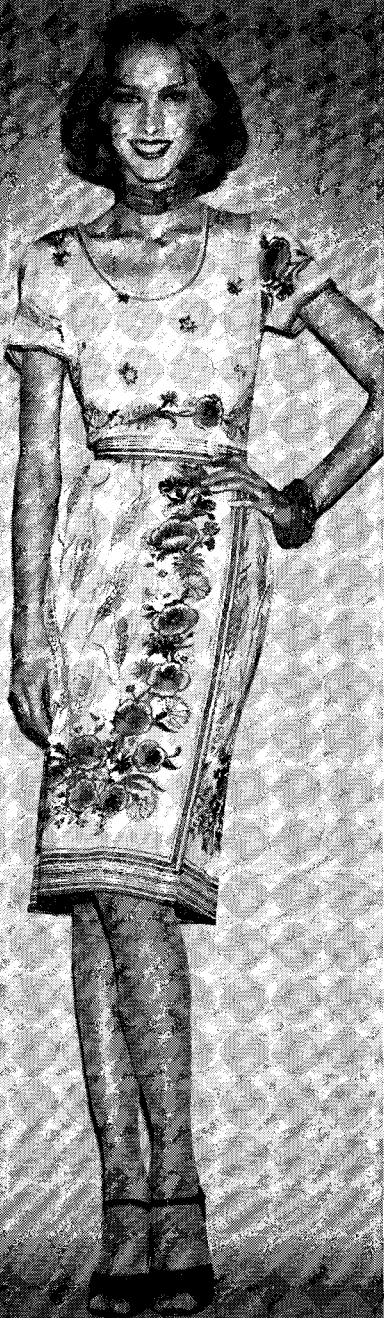


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was earned in a job or by an *accomplishment* or in motherhood. She knew this and half thought it was fair, and in a mental way she became intensely motherly; she tried to "achieve" something in her charities: she spoke of *needing* a job.

Meanwhile, the power was simply seized, wielded well or ill, femininely.

She based her righteousness on the issue of the wide-ranging general applicability of her life—as *The Life*—or as *What Life Is*. . . Her mind, outlook, judgments, experiences, and techniques were the issues she cared about. Well, why not? In a way, everything was being withdrawn retroactively because she was losing physical authority—she grew frantic. Why shouldn't she grow frantic? She wanted to be *general* and to be a leader, her life corroborated, like Caesar's when he seized the government.

People did the equivalent of making the evil eye at her; of course, often that was at moments when she was behaving and being really nice, soft-voiced, mannerly, and concerned; then she'd be enraged because she was given so little credit (people were afraid to trust her because of the way she blew up from time to time, so they didn't want to be lured when she was nice), and she ascribed a malevolence to life by which you were given credit only when you were young and good-looking. Some people pitied her—she often tried to use that pity ruthlessly and maliciously in order to despoil and cheat the one who pitied her. Momma said of people who avoided her that they were poor sports.

Or that they weren't "real men" or "real women." She added a new aspect to her public characterization of herself: she was a woman of gentle but hard-minded regret, primarily sexless, erect, who'd never liked sex or sexual power but who'd been a good sport about it for years—but now she'd been set free.

She claimed in an apparently tactful way—between outbreaks of her outrageous temper and cruelty of speech—to have a broader mind and broader perspective than other people; she claimed to be a woman who laughed at all pretensions, who was without self-pity, who condemned no one. She said of one of her relatives, "Well, she was always a lesbian, you know; she held on to her dignity; I felt sorry for her husband and children—you never saw such confused children in your life, sweet but confused: the boy is tender; and the girl

is tied up in knots, she's so boyish. Well, live and let live, I always say—I don't blame anyone: it's a hard life but it's all we have; it's a good life if you don't weaken."

She said, "I know how to laugh at myself."

She said, "I know who I am: I'm Leila Cohn. You'd think after all this time, after all I've been through, that name would mean a lot to people, but it only means *me*—of course, I'm somebody still—ha-ha."

She said, "I don't like to swear, but women have a God-damned hard row to hoe."

She grew narrower and more intense—just as prejudice said about middle-aged women.

Less sensible, less well-informed, more selfish, more willful.

Momma.

I BECAME aware all at once, when I was five—I mean the thought became clear, although it was wordless (I was sitting in the back seat of a car she was driving: she was in the front seat with Anne Marie)—that Momma was now half mad with impatience and maybe exhaustion and a kind of fear and a nothingness.

And another time: I was crossing a lawn, me and two other little boys; we were carrying, each of us, a toy gun, and I saw Momma running down the middle of the street, in dress-up clothes—furs, fancy shoes, hat, purse; she ran sort of with one shoulder moving mostly: still, it wasn't really bad running, considering how unexercised she was and how she was dressed; it wasn't fast, but it was graceful, and



there was a kind of physical expertness to it at times between bursts of panting, stumbling clumsiness, as when her shoes caught on cracks or unevennesses in the pavement. I curved out away from my friends and ran to her, ran alongside her. I'm not sure I asked her what was wrong, or that I said anything: I may have just joined her and run alongside her, carrying my gun, and concentrating on staying at her side.

I learned later, from eavesdropping and from asking questions and working over the answers (which rarely meant much when I first heard them, so I'd store up the words, some of the word sequences, and then go somewhere and be alone and *think*—or ponder—what the words could possibly mean, in the sense of referring to real life, real pain), that she'd been driving a car and had thought that the

driver of a bus was harrying her, and, in a fit of rage, she'd rammed the bus; then she was amazed at the damage to her car and she remembered she didn't have the power over policemen she'd once had (this was a different town, a suburb, and we didn't live on a ridge anymore but in a sort of slightly damp valley, with very large, dampish trees), or maybe she couldn't bear the way the men who gathered looked at her or the way one said she was a terrible driver, but she called them, or one of them, an obscenity, which made her afraid to go to court—"The judge will think I'm a God-knows-what"—and then she opened the car door. By then there was a traffic jam; and she took off: she ran off among the cars, and then between two houses, and then down streets.

Maybe she felt like running, like being physical.

But by the time I saw her, by the time she reached our block (the accident happened maybe two blocks away), she was anguished and tragic, her running was tragic, she was hunted and—I don't know what.

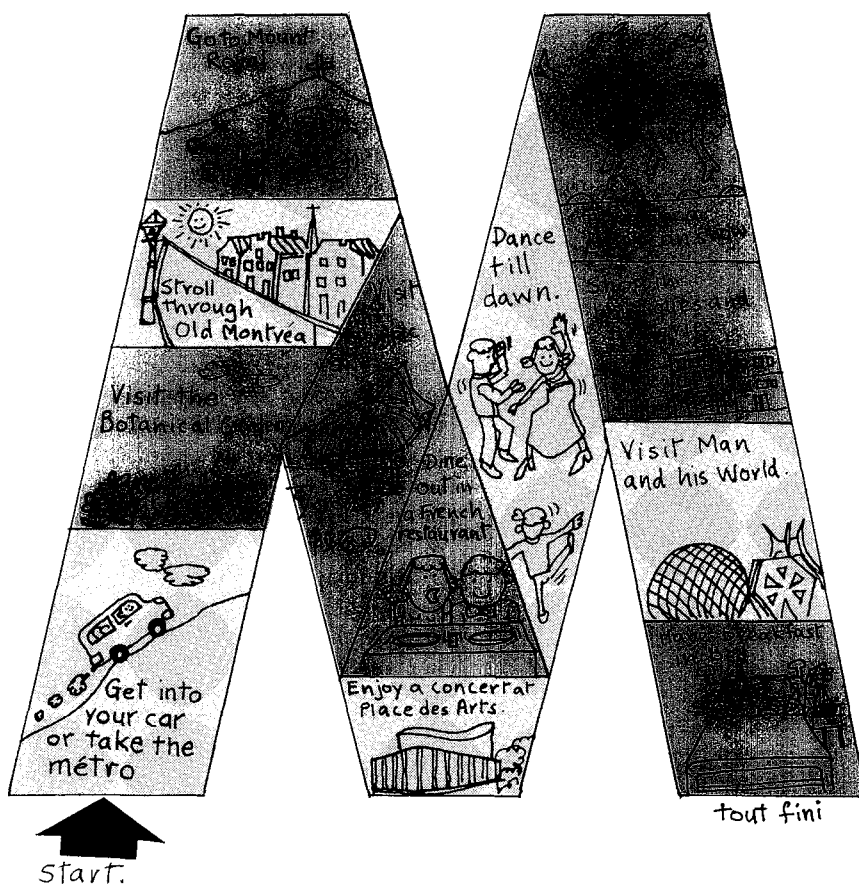
When we got to our house, she opened the door without ringing for the maid; she drew all the curtains—maybe the maid wasn't there; I guess she wasn't—and Momma took off her furs and dropped them on the floor behind a chair, and she and I hid, she squatting behind the couch, me there beside her; she had on some jewelry and a black dress: one knee was up, near her chin; one of her hands, long-nailed, with a pretty diamond-and-pearl ring on it, rested on the floor; she muttered something about the maid's never cleaning behind the couch.

Someone knocked on the door: there were noises as if there were four or five men outside: Momma said it was the police; she said to me, "Hush," and she held my hand with her one free hand while we squatted there, more or less facing each other, co-conspirators but not two children.

When they went away, Momma stood up, went to the window, peeked out through the curtains. Then she threw herself down on the couch and lay there and stroked my head; when I said, "Momma, what was it?" she stopped stroking my head and she said, "I'm getting old—don't ask me questions—go out and play."

I stood there and thought over if I wanted to be stubborn and ask again or if I wanted to go outside. . . . It was the darkness in the room, in her: I didn't like the airless, curtained darkness in her. I went outside, blinking

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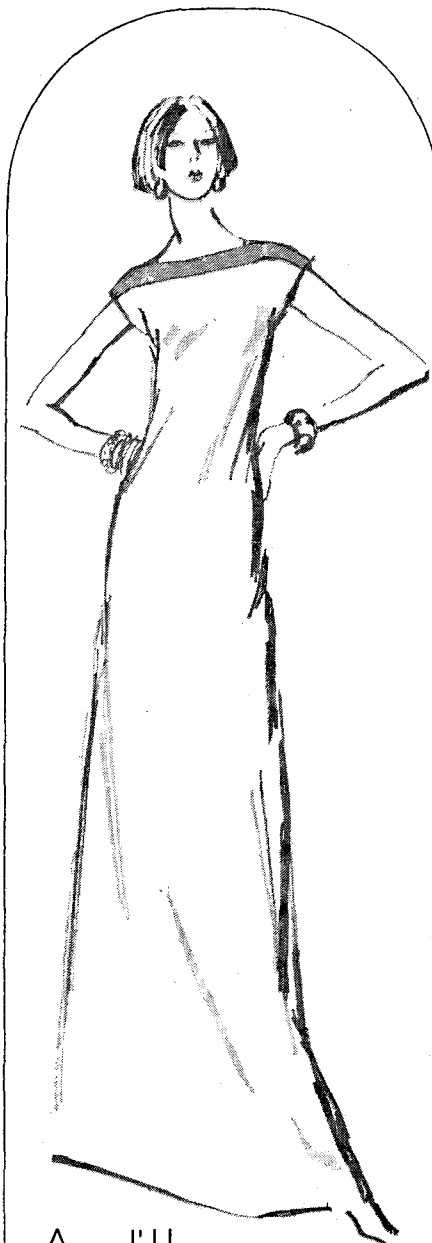
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in the air, in the revolving, settling late-afternoon light.

Maybe her successes were more and more temporary, less and less complete when they occurred: apparently, Daddy made less money; and while she didn't take the blame—she said he wasn't supposed just to listen to her, he was supposed to use his head too; she said he was a lousy businessman and so on—she seemed to gather to her, like the dark folds of a mysterious garment, a regret, an admission of failure, of lack of authority. Her new friends were "colder," she said, quicker to be bored, to drop someone "without actually dropping them—just all at once they're busy, or they're going to Florida: do you want to come, too? But you haven't the clothes or the ticket, so what kind of invitation is that?" Maybe the madness was of failure, after all.

But maybe she was bored by success and concentrated on the failures because they explained things or suited her mood: "I guess it's my turn to lose—I've always been too lucky."

ALSO, she wasn't very healthy anymore. She had gallbladder things, and back things; she had to get a board for her bed; she made a joke about it: "I'd probably feel wonderful if I slept on the floor;" she had a thyroid thing or maybe not; a hormone thing. . . . She blamed "difficulties"—her mistakes about business matters, her outbursts of temper, her not handling well the people she set herself to please—on physical pain, physical disorders: "I stood up too late in life—I ruined my back and a lot of my organs. . . . But I had to slouch when I was young—I was—busty—you know—I was too much for a lot of people as it was—ha-ha. . . ."

She was so stubborn in her plots even when they didn't work, she tried to do things to everyone, even her doctors, she kept changing her style, she kept taking off her masks and putting on new ones, she tried out so many forms of being effective, even as Lady Macbeth—I mean she played that role, too ("Why don't you become a gangster, S.L.? There's money in it;" and she said to me, "Cheat more—learn now. It will come in handy;" and she wasn't joking: she'd get mad and yell at me if I didn't cheat as she advised me to; but then she'd say, "Well, I don't like to lie—honesty, when you've said and done, is the best policy")—she changed so abruptly so many times of

day, she summoned so many fears and feelings in people, that she *was* witch-like.

Daddy said to me we had to see Momma through a difficult time.

But he often lost patience with her.

He'd say he loved her but he'd say it dryly or sarcastically, and she would reply with an almost idle air of being good at repartee, in a voice of resigned, dry rightness compared to his naïveté, his stupidity, "I know what your love is like, S.L.—and what I want is for you to be good to me. Don't love me, just be good to me."

Daddy would yell at her, "You're a rattlesnake—you have a poisonous mouth on you would kill an elephant—you're a terrible person, a crazy woman—it's death to be around you—you can't control yourself at all—you like to hurt people—you want everyone to be as miserable as you are!"

She'd look at him—she gave him a wife's look.

She would often look as if she was saying: *you fool*, and *this is what my life is*, and *God, this is what I have*.

Sometimes she would glare at him in a way that held the wild glaring threat of true lunacy; but even then it always seemed to me it was *only Momma*.

She was always, no matter what she said, a familiar, a normal presence to me.

She would let herself say, in front of Nonie, "I have a feeling Nonie will marry well—men like dumb girls," and Nonie was implacable toward Momma anyway: she said Momma was crazy; she refused to listen to her; Momma said, "Nonie's like a rat leaving a sinking ship." And she said accusingly, "I have to have a life, too, Nonie," but Nonie was firm, and Momma, oddly, half respected Nonie—or was bored by her; anyway, Nonie was firm and only let Momma near her if Momma did her specific favors, if Momma came up with money or would wash Nonie's hair; otherwise Nonie would be relentless and say, "You've never been a real mother to me."

Daddy was often flustered when Momma threatened him with her dissolution. He said he didn't care about her, but he did in a way. But he loathed it when she was indomitable—he said to her often, "Don't be such a goddam big shot all the time—try giving up."

She said to me once, "I'll tell you a secret—I'll tell you what's wrong



with getting older—nothing is fun anymore—you get bored. . . .”

She said to people, “Things are only just beginning to get interesting now; when I was young I was a fool.”

She said, “I don’t dwell on the past—but I’ll say this: I had fun; it wasn’t so wonderful but it was fun.”

She never said “I love you” in such a way that it meant she was giving herself or you absolution or as if it erased time: it was a contract, a matter of sharing the same address, of being involved, in a somewhat dirty way, in each other’s pride and respectability; it held no guarantee of pleasure; it remained an open question what was really meant by it . . . except that she wouldn’t let you starve (but she might let you die or wish you were dead).

She said, “This is a very difficult time for me and S.L.—*I’m not sure we’re going to make it. . . .*”

And: “Everyone makes it—I suppose we will, too.”

She would yell at Daddy, “YOU’RE NO HELP TO ME!”

She said, “He tries but he’s too . . . *dumb* to be a real help.”

Sometimes, when things were really bad for her, she would stand in the hallway and shout in a voice that was hollow and unhappy and full of challenging or of summoning you to combat alongside her but in her war, and it only had to do with you insofar as you were dependent on her: “I’m . . . trying . . . to keep things . . . *going* . . . but . . . no . . . one . . . is . . . helping . . . me! . . .”

ACROSS this part of her life, most of my childhood was inscribed.

IV

WHEN I was a child, I was a bouquet on two legs.

Momma calls me to come see company: “There are people who want to see you—”

The doorway to the living room rises with a gross grandeur, framing my slow, staring entrance. Around the room is an irregular palisade of knees and a floating, discontinuous frieze of heads, foreshortened, proper, with the flattish propriety and exoticism of identities dressed up and that I don’t recognize.

Momma says, “Give everyone a hug—don’t play favorites. . . .”

It made *trouble*—discomfort—quick nervous jokes sprang up—like stiff needle-like weeds, whipping and cutting—if I did not want to touch someone, if I didn’t want to hug someone.

I held up to these people, I present-

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ed to their embrace, a substance entirely mysterious to me, the bouquet of my childishness, my childish reality.

I held up to them a *face*, looks I was unaware of except when I stared at myself in a mirror. My looks were the reason I was in that house . . . the face, in the silence of the mirror.

I hold up a face, a posture, a manner, a skimpy musculature, blond hair, a young namelessness, and all the plurals, sheaves, and sheets of childish sweetness, seducibility, whatever, to a soft, smelly life that leans over me. I am enclosed in a hug, in a noisy crumpled whisper of ironed linen. I don't know it's linen: I name it now. Then it was a roughish, nice matting, a sliding, a half-silence of ignorance in me.

Only when I was seriously hurt was I entirely without power, was I powerlessness itself.

In the living room with company, my polite whoring sometimes led to this: one would be bedded with shocking suddenness on a look of comprehension in someone's eyes, a look pushing in at me with a hint that someone knew more about my life, about the circumstances of my being a child, than I did: this person could tell me—things. . . .

Ah, God, the seductiveness of intelligence: it is one of the first things a pretty child learns.

What struck me over and over in my childhood was the outsideness of speech. To me. This was perhaps because I was adopted (but I was not aware then of having been adopted: I did not know what a word involving bellies and births, a word such as "adopted," meant).

I could not attach what was outside of me, in speech, to what was inside of me, even as desire. Momma can say to me, "Come closer, I want to comb your hair." I do not understand how speech succeeds in making me obey. I don't know how to do that, how to want speech to do that. If I want to touch Momma's hair, I go to her, I lift my hand, and she guesses, she supplies the command and the obedience. My inner sense of everything remained tentative, shadowy, elusory of course, patient—everything in me was placed like a thing that I'd found and brought home and that had childishly perceived attributes, glimpsed or stared at, attached to it . . . incomplete; each tag said: *incomplete: in time you'll know. Maybe.*

I never suspected or thought language and my feelings were one. Or, for that matter, that life was mine—or sleep. Each of those was a surprise, a

penalty, or a gift; and I trespassed on them, as into a closet of Christmas gifts.

I never had the sense that everyone else was an aspect of the life in me; the world always had other people in it—indeed, *was* other people—and I was attached to life through them: I was part of *their* lives. When I am *good*—or loving—or docile—I belong to people more than to me, and people know this and are proprietary.

I am a bouquet and belong to this house; I am only turned back over to myself, I am a separate identity only when I am bad.

Wickedness that I consciously do is my real name for myself.

I can remember being awake and asleep at the same moment; and then going over to the sweetness of study, the study of one's life that dreams are, among the clover of interlocking private meanings—the clover, the bloom of sleep.

I remember waking too early, moving in the hallways of the house of the sleepers, I remember padding into my parents' room.

I am in my parents' bed. Their bodies are big (they are both asleep) and their bodies give off heat, and the sheets and my parents' chests and arms are warm and vast; they seem red to me with heat; and the sheets are blue with reflections of the blue walls and pink with the reflection of the heat in my parents' huge bodies—it seems to me.

The scale is dismaying—comforting—obscene. My mother's knee pushes me frighteningly (she knows I am uneasy about her knees and will herd me with her knee when she is awake: she doesn't grab me with her hand and pull me, the way other mothers do their children: if she tries, I may yell at her). When I am quite little, I stand holding the headboard and do not wake the sleepers.

My breath is tiny compared to Momma's, whose breath is small compared to Daddy's, which is immense: his breath makes the room shiver, with a peculiar, troubling rhythm.

I climb over Daddy to the edge of the bed, I climb down from the bed, I move out onto the bedroom carpet: my breathing is different now as I look back at the bed, at the sleeping figures on it: they are absent, entombed—whereas I—

I am a standing child now.

I AM looking out an upstairs window, waiting for my mother to return from a "luncheon."

I stand quite still. Waiting, and the



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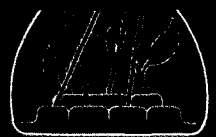
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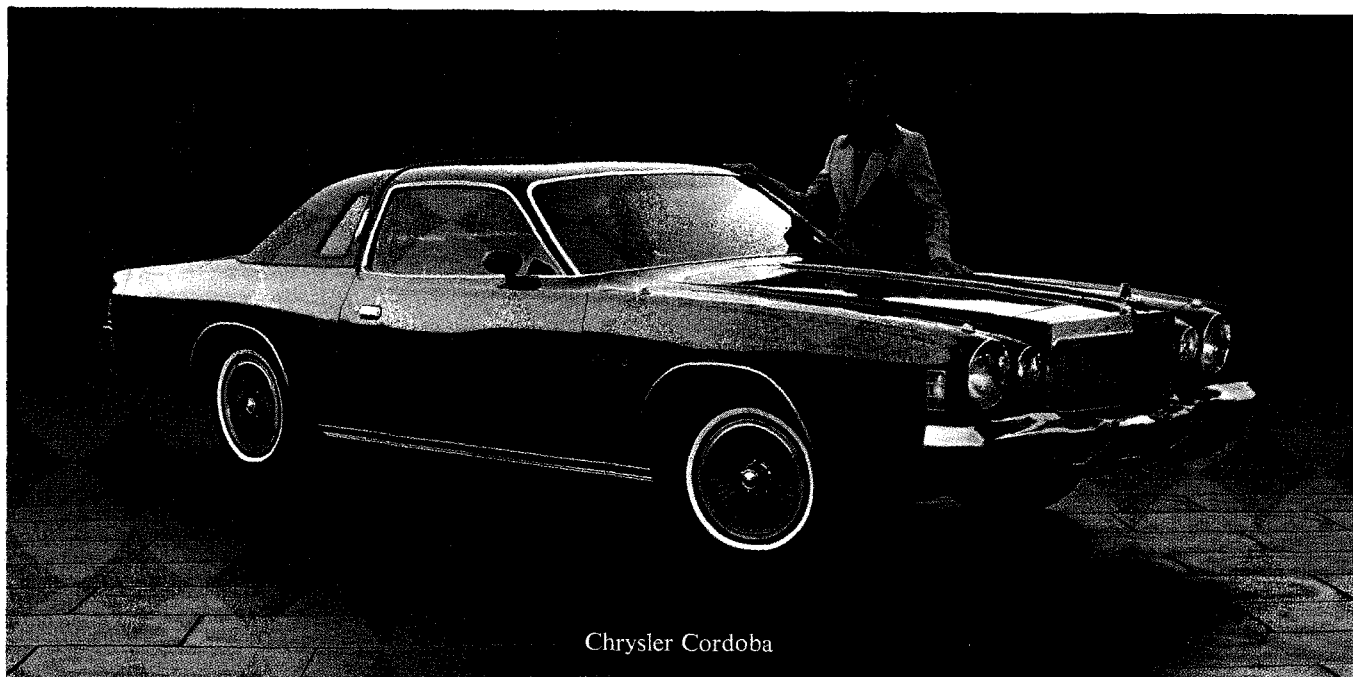
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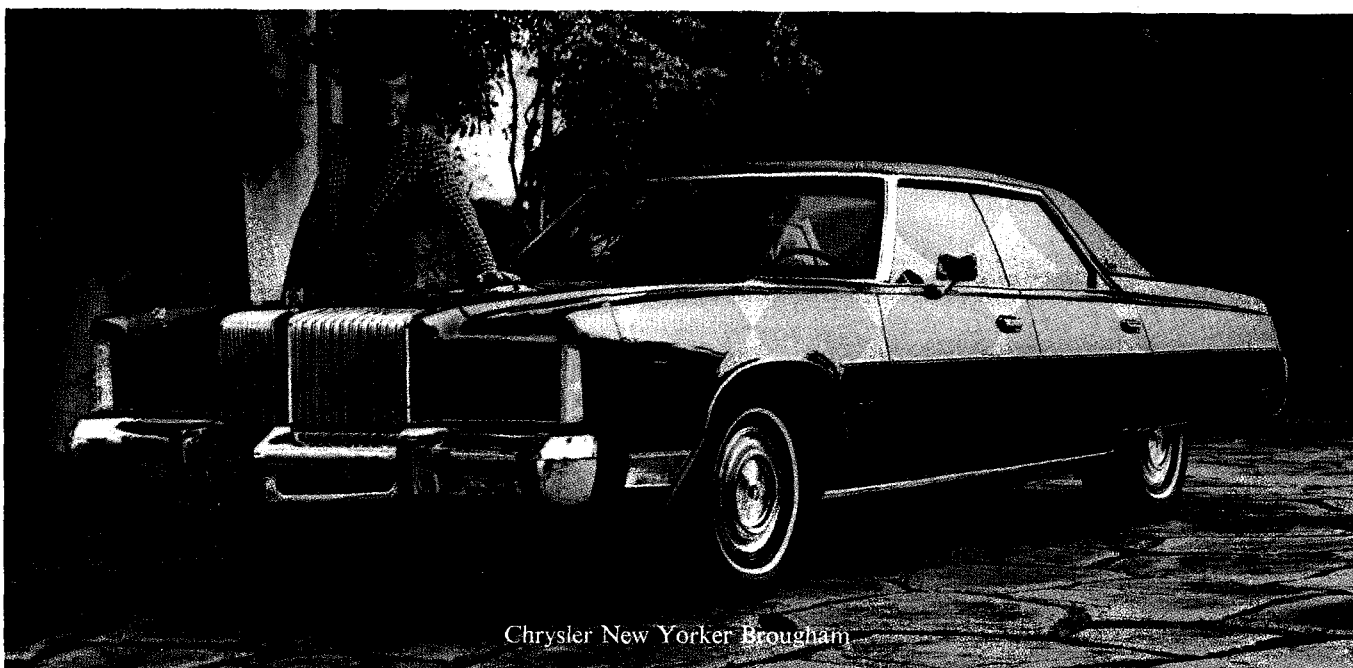
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air—heated by the sunlight that comes through the window—tickle me. It is as if I am a prisoner on an old, dusty plush couch or as if the heat and stillness and torment of abeyance for a child are like a hot, buggy lake in a Midwestern woods—it is that severe, that extreme. A stubble of purpose and of discontent rubs at me like Daddy's face sometimes when he doesn't shave. I am going to make a scene when Momma comes home.

This beetling-browed effort, this determination to remember to make a scene—something is owed me for this. For the tragic and fierce wit and slapstick and pain of singleness of purpose when I am still *a child*. . . .

I have changed. There was no exact point of transfer. The change took place over a *period of time*, waking and sleeping. It is almost as if a slowly turning wheel, very large, like a waterwheel—time being the water; or one's observations being the water—propelled me, brought me to the window. The goodness that had been me belonging to the others, to the household, now comes partly under my purview; and I am its guardian, somewhat legalistic, sometimes complacent, sometimes fierce: a knight: a referee: a child. . . . I have escaped—at least some of the time, whenever I am not tired or ill or defeated—into something like independence as a child, as now.

I saw a car driven too fast, in the wrong lane, on the suburban street on the ridge. Momma. Momma in her navy-blue Buick coupé. Life in America is hard: you have to know so much: and it keeps changing—what you have to know, that is: such as that Momma's car is a dark Buick this year.

When she drives, she breathes through her nose, often haughtily; I notice *that*: it is a detail, of courage, competition, and competence. She drives with angry, pushy hauteur; she whips around corners; her hair snaps if she opens the window, which she does if she is headed homeward; if she is going out, the windows are closed: she passes every other car, condemning, often aloud, the other drivers, the showoffy men, the cowardly men. She thinks men don't understand about cars—that is, that cars are for power, self-expression, efficacy, and speed because time is short and often dull.

After a while, driving, she gets sweaty, *realistic*, semi-exhausted—then she sort of lets the car have its own way: she turns corners lazily, as now: the Buick drives three or four feet onto the lawn—I can see Momma dimly

from where I am, above and looking down, Momma wrenching impatiently, belatedly at the steering wheel until the car returns to the gravel driveway.

I prefer Momma to Daddy—the way she is is more interesting: she is fairer to me; I'd rather obey her than him because she leaves you alone more—she doesn't really, but she sort of does—and she is very sparing about physical hugs, about immersing you in darkness and the past and those parts of you: she talks, and much of her talk has to do with what is fair and unfair, fair and unfair to her, to women, but still it's closer to being interesting to me than Daddy's stuff about love and be a good boy.

Momma was frightened a lot of the time, but she was impatient about it: she just sailed on; she yelled or nagged or complained or smiled; she sailed *into* it, into whatever was frightening—she was, in a sense, sloppy with courage, with will. To Daddy, losing love, having my attention wander, his being passed over by me (by anyone), was really terrible: he was furious, itchy, restless: he would nag you good-temperedly or bad-temperedly, judge and punish you, and keep at it until you were confused—that was one of the things he knew. How to frighten you. Momma tried to frighten me but she didn't do it well: some pressure radiated out from her, but I was not frightened: I was there, blinking, undeniably male—inside, being male was a melting sensation, runny, private when she tried to frighten me: “Do so-and-so or I'll tell your father on you.”

Momma thinks Daddy knows more about being a boy—or man—than she does: she expects me to be *deferential* toward Daddy; she has an idea of how men treat each other: she thinks that deference is the key to the world of men, or is its gateway, or is the way a man or boy gains protection.

Momma climbs out of her car.

MOMMA IS HERE. . . .

Here-I-go—my project is for getting justice for Anne Marie: Nonie has been rude to her. I start to run. The safety pin by which my shirt is fastened to my pants tugs—“I'm tired of seeing his navel,” Momma has said. I am resigned to being comic in my herohood.

No, I'm not. Not yet.

I run fairly well. Nonie will sometimes say of me now, “*He's not a baby anymore—he knows what he's doing.*” If I have the wrong look on my face, I will suddenly get less sympathy and no support from the grown-

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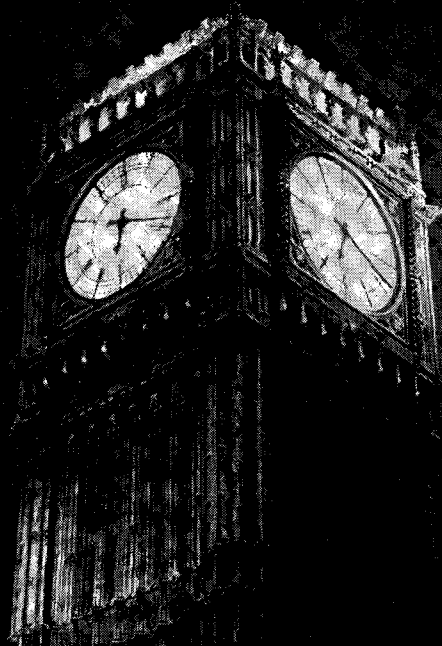


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ups—knowingness is sympathy-extinguishing around here. But Momma has a sort of welcome for sinners, criminals, Faustians, defilers, and blasphemers, and she occasionally now makes room for me as one of them. As a young male, I guess, as a child of a certain sort, a handsome child—of hers, according to various laws.

WE must shift around in time. When we move from the ridge, into the new neighborhood, I am a great success; when I go outside, there are always two or three and sometimes eight or nine kids on my lawn, waiting for me; sometimes when I appear, older kids say, "Here he is"—they give me rides on their bicycles and talk to me. . . . I almost whisper inside myself, I almost tiptoe, it is so amazing, I am so—*established*. I feel pride, my arrival at this estate as happiness. As triumph. This is serious to me. I turn on my parents when they interfere. Daddy doesn't want me to play outside at all: "You're getting mixed up with trash." He's crazy. Momma finds it hard to support his position. (She murmurs, "He's jealous—that's all it is. . . .")

Some days, when Momma, behind in her scheduling, absently and hurriedly and then poignantly calls me to come inside to get cleaned up—it is for Daddy, so we'll be clean and pretty to welcome him home—I don't want to go. Finally, I don't go.

She does not come after me; she sends Anne Marie if we are in the first house, the other maid if we are in the second house; but I hide from the other maid; Momma sends Nonie, but I won't obey *her*, so that finally Momma must send Daddy: she cannot hide from him any longer that the child they adopted to be a son to him and keep him amused and happy has no interest in the old games with him, or very little.

Daddy shouts to me from the front door. But I am arrogant—steely—the child is spoiled and full of temper. Daddy comes after me; he is enraged: "What is this, what do you think you're doing, what is the meaning of this disobedience to your mother?"

Part of the contempt I feel for him is the way he forces me to obey Momma, who then turns me over to him: he is not direct or honest. I am determinedly brave, resistant to him, my old love.

I shout, "THE GAME I'M IN'S NOT OVER! YOU NEVER ASK ME IF I WANT TO COME IN!" The neighbors

usually don't meddle with each other—yes, they do, but they do it more with S.L.: “Hey there, S.L., that's a good kid you have there—let him play—” (Part of it is if I leave, the kids will stop playing, or the game will slow down: their kids will get gloomy: I really am the junior king of the block.) But part of it is they don't like my father. He says to them, “We have our own way of doing things. . . .” He smiles at them as if to say they have to like and admire him—which is lousy tactics in that neighborhood. . . .

Momma said dryly of the child I was, “I have to be nice or I do without friends, but he's stubborn and rude and crazy as a March hare and carries on like God-knows-what and the other children just think he's special, they seem to like it, God-knows-why—I don't know how he gets away with it. Of course, he's beautiful to look at—but I wasn't bad to look at, either, when I was young, and I never got away with anything.”

The children I play with—the older children, too—envelop me with acceptance. Sometimes they are so raw and infected and forward with acceptance that I cannot think or suffer or repine at all but am—mentally—blind and onward-rushing, and suddenly seem to wake—to the brilliance of the world—and I stare, dazzled by everything, by my own happiness or satisfaction—what can this state be called? Each day, each moment whirled and shone; and I must have shone, too, like a lantern, with light, with luck. One grownup said to me once when I was adolescent, “You were the most beautiful child I ever saw—it's strange that none of it lasted.” In the games, I shout, “Oh, you shot me—I'm dying!” I fling up my arms, I jerk spasmodically, I throw myself on the ground and I kick up and down or I roll over and over: the grass brushes my cheeks, my lips and nose, delicately rough-edged, many-tongued grass, a rug of ghost-tongues. The smell of grass roots comes: the sweet dirt odor. Houses whirl in the dusk.

I was hated, too—by one or two kids—and by Nonie, who was sometimes *agonized*. Her face would twist with real anger. One day a boy she liked came by and spoke to me and merely nodded to her: she slammed me in the face with a brick (the chimney was being repaired). When I came back from the doctor's, four or five kids were waiting on the lawn; and they went and got others; and I spoke to them from my window.

I had the fineness of an abstention

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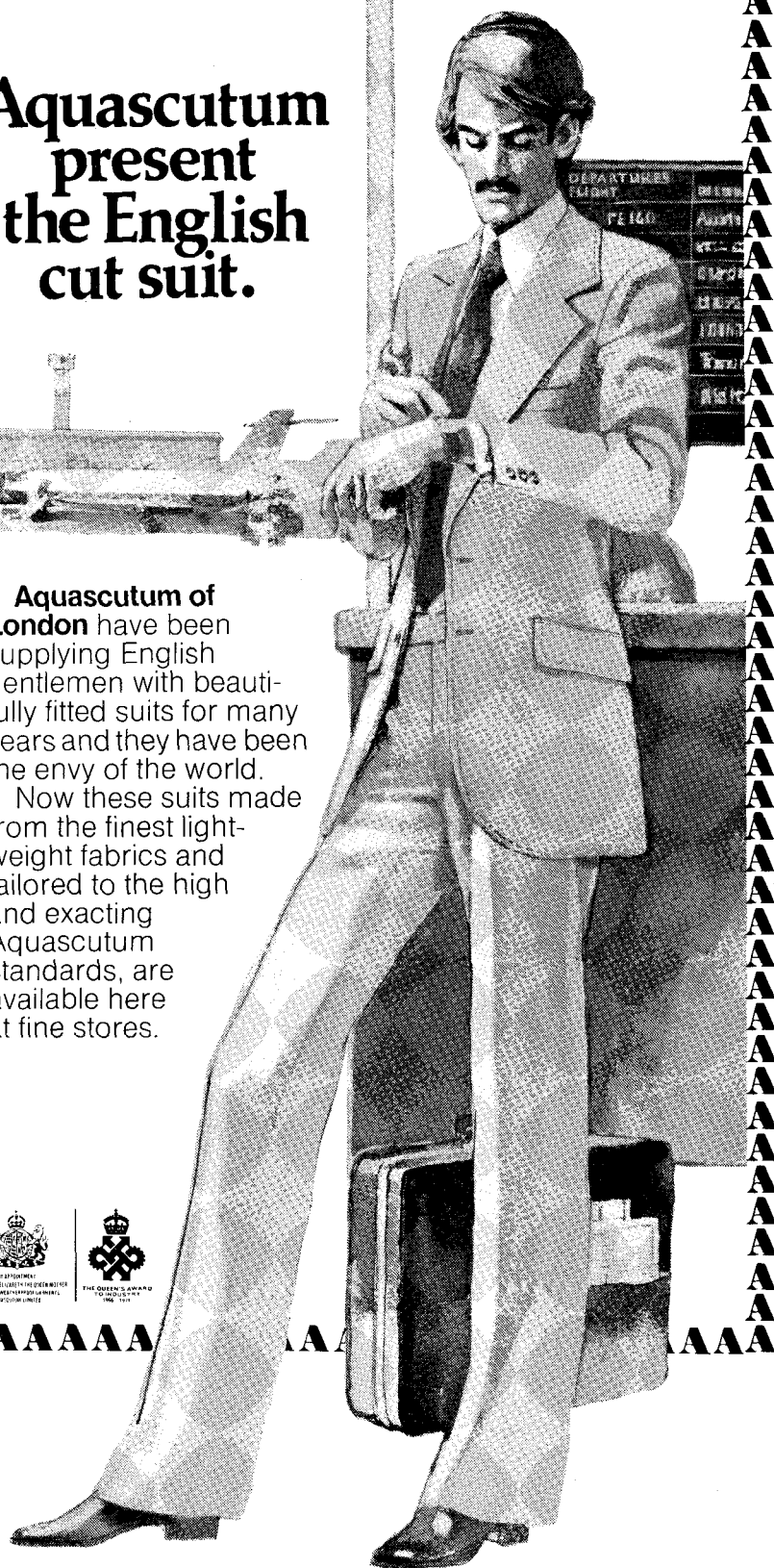
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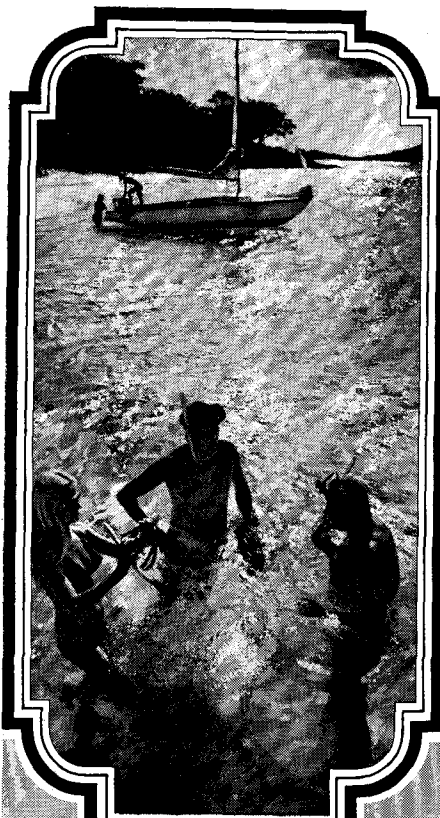
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from cruelty, of contempt for cruelty, when I was still very young (although it excited me in a frightening way). And then I reeked of having been saved over and over again, of having that much value. And the physical luminosity of looks that had gained me a home. And I was so unafraid of pain—brave with an intake of breath. When I consider the brightness of life's regard for that child, I can hardly credit that it went on day after day, that with intermissions (when things went wrong) it was habitual, my regular life.

S.L. did not like it really—he missed me. Momma says, "Whatever happens, I get the worst of it. I bear the brunt. I don't understand it: I'm smart: I use my head all the time: I don't see where I make my mistakes. . . ."

She said to people, "I'm jealous of that child—sometimes." And: "He's not like us—his mother was a remarkable woman—I don't know that I should get any credit: I'm not much on motherhood."

Or: "I don't see why you say he's not like me—we're both outstanding, him and me—I'll take the credit."

I could not understand her moods, or Daddy's—any of that. I stared sometimes at her; I rarely anymore looked at him; I did not understand.

One time, Momma was bawling me out and suddenly I laughed at her—a little crazily; quite crazily, maybe—but I had no words, no taunts or arguments I could utter. My lunacy scalded her: she raised her hand to slap me; I laughed still more, victoriously—crazily, maybe—and then I ran away.

In plays that are comedies, no one is truly lucky—it would be too frightening, I suppose, to wait to see what is going to happen to them.

"Here comes the big shot," Daddy would say absently, half agreeably, or with sarcasm, all affection in abeyance.

He disapproved of my happiness, my personal glory: he wanted me to love him as I had before. To let myself be loved and tended as before. I'd scowl and be blank and polite—a fine but sullen child: such patient, obstinate hauteur!

He took no pride in the moment's luck—my farfetched luck: "The boy is spoiled rotten." He gained no comfort for whatever were his terrors and difficulties. I was happily insolent toward his loneliness. Stubborn. He meant to bind me to his protection, his

idea of home-as-comedy, with no one too lucky.

In what way was I his son?

I felt my generosity was greater than his—I wanted him to have everything. The inequality blasted me aloft, askew, away from him. I rose into the air as if in an explosion.

At times, he still managed to display a crowded, small loyalty—intent but brief—to me; his affection would hover in the air, like a haze of pollen; even his sarcasm would balloon with affection sometimes; but chiefly he was betrayed because I was a "smart-aleck"—he was a being in a sad play, a king with a sad message in his hand.

He said in reproach, in sarcasm, in sadness, in self-exculpation, in warning, "You don't need a father—all you need is an audience."

He had a child—Nonie.

Leila said again and again to S.L., "Let him have a good time!"

She would add, "After all, it won't last—it never lasts. . . ."

SHE said to me, "Remember, women aren't spoilsports: tell your wife someday I was a help to you." I can't remember a time when she didn't speak constantly of my getting married: "What a trial you'll be for your wife."

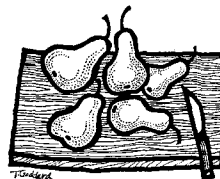
It was never settled in our house what the top ten laws were, or even what the first law was—getting money, or loving each other, or getting ahead, or being just. What came first kept changing. Daddy wanted his tiredness to be the first law. (I wanted justice, legal symmetry.) He said his life and substance went into labor to enable us to live. He asked for charity, but he was too good-looking, too rich for charity—he wanted charity too soon.

"It's all too much for me," he would say, an amateur mendicant.

Occasionally, I get physically hurt so badly that I go and stand near my parents and wait for them to do something for me. They say then, "Oh, it's all too much for you sometimes, isn't it—yes, it's too much for you still—you're still just a little boy."

I don't love other children more than I love my parents but I find other children more attractive than I find my parents now.

I LEAVE, for a moment, the child in the hallway—the memory in which I run down the hallway, both light and heavy with skills, with in-



tentness: inside a glare of semi-mastery.

I am older—older—older. . . . What is intelligence? Momma—Leila, my other mother, my second one—said to me over and over, "Someone who is *really* smart never lets anyone know they're smart." There came a time when I could say, *Yes, Momma, I see*. But at first it seemed to me—the child looked at her obliquely—that she was saying the first act of intelligence had to be slyness, sly self-concealment.

When I was in kindergarten, someone noticed me. The tests were simple at first and given by a woman on the school staff; then someone came from the local high school; then a team appeared from the local university.

The last group of tests went on for five days. The testers, with great excitement, told Momma and S.L. that I was wonderful, *prodigious*, especially considering how unintellectual Momma and S.L. were; and the testers said I needed, must have a special sort of upbringing. They explained that I was the equivalent of a twelve-year-old, and in some ways of a fifteen-year-old; but Momma and S.L. did not know that that was meant partly as a metaphor, not an actuality, and that it dealt with mental games, really. Momma and S.L. could not believe I was "smart in *that way*—" They had never noticed. They knew me very well. Someone was mistaken. I laughed and simply, conceitedly, but patiently waited for the special treatment of me to begin.

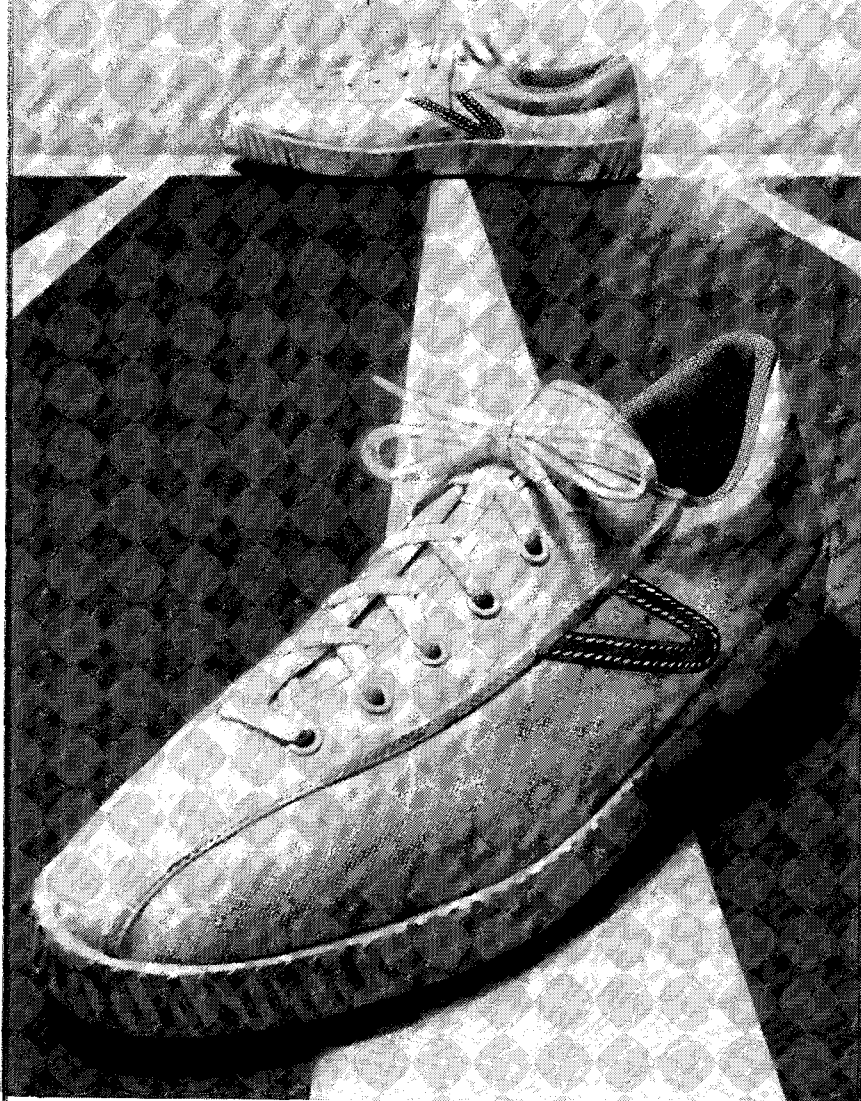
Momma was quick at picking up things, she said (it was true), but her mind was not analytic or consecutive; S.L., even in his own opinion, was without mental discipline. In some ways, whether the child actually was intelligent to the degree the testers claimed or not—that is, whether or not he had the capacity to be a prodigy—he was in some respects the possessor of a quality of mind unshared by his parents, but that is a statement of little point: what is to the point is that his mind, the neighborhood belief in the nature of that mind, the actuality of that mind caused pain.

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The *community* (part of it) became very excited about "*our little genius*." Nonie was frantic—in fact, hysterical. She lay on the floor and screamed off and on for weeks. She attacked me with a knife—three times. She threatened to kill herself; she wanted me out of the house and into an orphan asylum or given away. She was crazy and unbelievably sad, anguished, hateful and vindictive. She kept insisting,

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wildly, as if it were the first premise of reality, that none of it about her brother's intelligence was true: she demanded that it be untrue.

Daddy was heartbroken. At first, he acted mildly amused and disbelieving: the popularity had been bad enough. Now he thought I laughed at him. (Sometimes I did.) His emotions were violent: heartbreak, stubborn loneliness perhaps: anger certainly, strange, sneering anger, even rage, then silence flaring and thickening, and he would refuse to look at or touch me. "You don't need a father like me—I'm the old-fashioned kind," he said.

Daddy was perhaps fraudulent, self-concerned, conceited, and dumb: he was very uncomfortable in the suburb where we lived.

Nonie *mind*ed so much and went on for so long out of control that doctors had to be called in. I must admit I did not care about her discomfort or Daddy's. I watched Nonie with a sort of distaste—almost satisfaction. I watched Daddy with distaste and thought, *All right for him.*

S.L. kept saying of me, "Doesn't he care? Why doesn't he care about his sister? He has no heart." He never blamed me in relation to himself except to say, "I can't like a child like you," when he was particularly angry; but I snubbed his opinion.

Momma, when she was told she and Daddy ought to reorganize themselves, devote themselves, their lives, to me—become supporting actors, give their money and time to incubating what lay (or did not exist) in my skull—said, "I don't want the child to be a freak."

She was trying to reestablish equilibrium. She said in private, "I haven't the faintest idea what to do." When the testers said Momma had to take me here, take me there: that she was to set herself to study psychology, especially child psychology: that Daddy was to read certain books and enter therapy and attend lectures at college: that Nonie was to be considered (this was not said clearly but it was implied) merely a problem on the periphery of the great adventure of the possible prodigy, Momma said they must be crazy: S.L. would leave her; Nonie would not survive.

I don't know if anyone laughed at the Cohns, at their "luck" in adopting a child such as me: I don't know if it was ironic that nearly everyone said the Cohns were *lucky*.

Daddy did not object in theory to

doing a lot of things for a child, but in actuality he liked only to enjoy himself with a happy child in a dream landscape of joy. In these new matters, clearly, he could take no joy. He literally could not. Momma said he loved me too much—that he was too childish himself to be anything but hurt. As for herself, her objections were "a matter of common sense." She said that study and prodigyhood would ruin my looks; she thought the way I looked was now and would always be of more use than "brains of that sort" (the newly discovered and theoretical intelligence or freakishness) could be. Besides, she needed me to keep Daddy from leaving her.

The situation grew sourer: Momma went to a P.-T.A. meeting; and she who considered herself smarter than most other people was overturned... insulted... beset: she was dressed in furs; she looked *fine*; but everything she was, everything she had accomplished in her life, was laughed at by the people there at the P.-T.A. because of her attitude, her self-defense in the face of the putative intelligence newly discovered in a child she had adopted for his looks.

Nonie's tantrums, Daddy's moods, Momma's calculations. A joke. To me. I went on whirling. I refused to listen to them; I corrected them all the time; I *was* a smart-aleck, as Daddy said. I trusted them to go on caring about me. I thought they had to be "nice" to me: I remember stamping my foot and saying, "*This is my home!*," and the way the three of them—Momma, Daddy, Nonie—looked at me when I said that.

THE testers and various people fought; they said, "We must prepare him—we must not lose time... He doesn't get at home from you... what he needs to—" Momma's voice intervenes: "—become something in twenty years. Well, I don't want to think about twenty years from now; it's hard enough for me to plan for the next twenty minutes."

Momma said to the outsiders, "Well, we're his guardians and we don't want that kind of life for him at all. Years of work and no fun—no, thank you. My husband and I have talked it over and we'll talk it over some more, but we're really interested in leaving the child alone. Also there are other people in this house I have to worry about—you people have no practical sense..."



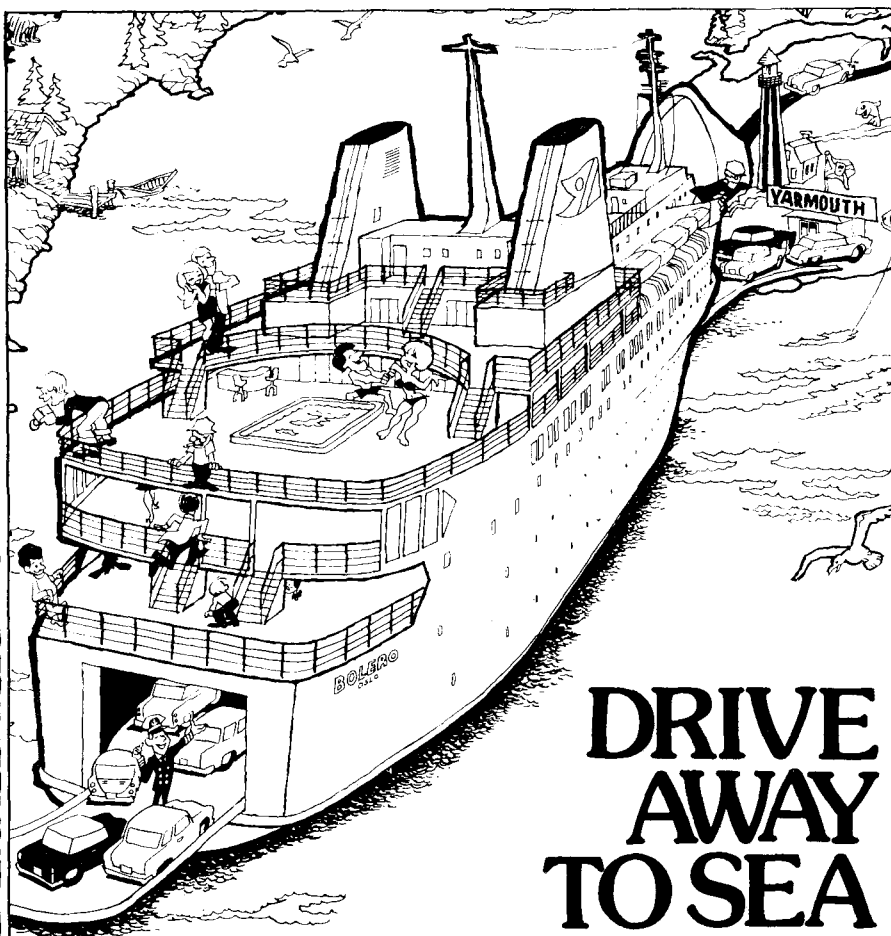
She said, "We don't want him pushed."

She said, "Leave him alone—let him have a childhood."

MOMMA said to a friend of hers about Nonie, "I don't blame her for being upset—she was a very dull child, not popular, and she grew up late: she's just getting her figure now, she's pretty, boys are getting interested, the good years are just starting for her, people are starting to listen to what she has to say, and now this happens and everything that happens to her hardly seems worthwhile; she's overshadowed, she's not going to get to have any life. It's not right. And it hurts her the way people talk about him and her and then they ask him things like he's an oracle and they laugh at her and she was just getting her confidence. I don't think it's fair. Girls have a right to live, too. She was just getting to the point where she was far enough ahead of him she could be nice to him—now she hates him. Frankly, I don't blame her. I hate him, too, sometimes—he's impossible. She has only a few years like these years—why can't the child wait? I promised his mother I'd give him an education and I will, but I don't know what all those crazy people are talking about. I think it's better for him to learn how to fit in—with women especially—he'll marry someday. I don't want him to be a lonely man: Nonie and I have to have our lives, too. I know him—he's not as smart as they say he is—he's clever for a child, that's all—he knows how to make himself liked. Let him stay in the background for a few years, let him grow up as a human being and get some good experience under his belt, I don't intend to push him, let him be a child and enjoy himself, he can learn later. . . ."

She said, "Listen, I've known people who went off and became famous: I went with Gaynor Milton: he won an Academy Award for best supporting actor; he is one of the best-dressed men in Hollywood. He was always miserable—he had such an ego—he was very lonely: ask me, I'll tell you. I wouldn't wish that on the child. And I'll tell you something: if he's so smart, he'll amount to something in good time—enough is as good as a feast: that's an old saying and a true one, believe me. . . ."

She was sincere at times. She said to me, "I don't think you know what's going on, but maybe you do: you're always watching. Listen, life is funny: I may be a bad woman—people have always said I was: I'll tell you



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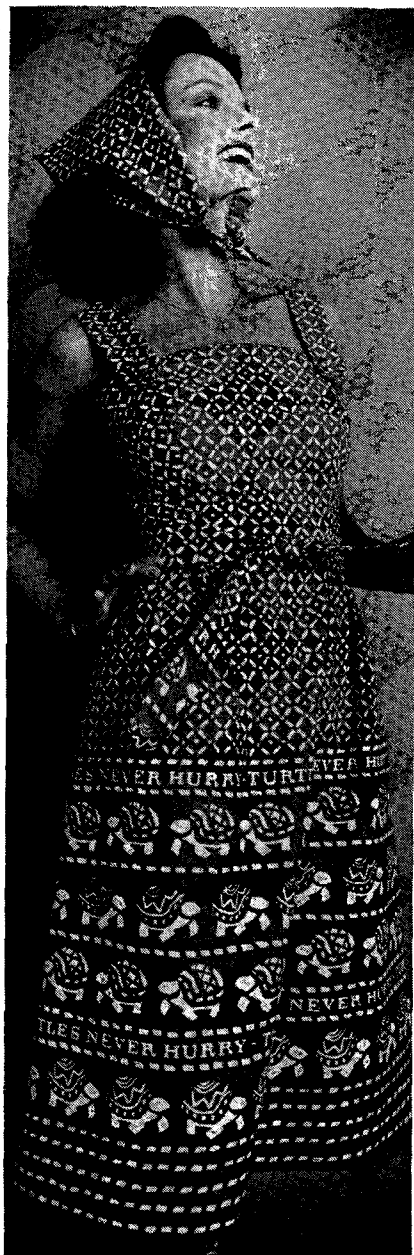
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the truth: sometimes I think I am, but I don't care; I don't know why I have to make all the decisions: it won't hurt you to be normal: your father, Daddy, S.L., you love him, don't you? He doesn't like bookish people—he and I don't really get along; we're not suitable; but I made my bed and I'm going to lie in it: he loves you—it's me he blames: he thinks he has no...right...to be your father...if you're so damned smart: *if you love him, you'll be sensible, listen to me, don't ever show him you're smart...*"

I didn't believe Momma: I didn't understand what she was saying—I felt that Daddy loved me—there were emotions in him; I see them when he puts me to bed, when he gives me a good-night hug and kiss—I was surer of him than of her....

I didn't understand any human issue—this was an enormous game.

More and more, I make Daddy angry—he says I like to make a fool of him. Momma is desperate—almost tragic. He blames her (he will leave her). Daddy is not proud of me (he says he likes "ordinary kids who have good hearts"), and so I snub him—and then he gets angry and puffish: he thinks he can be disgusted and still put me to bed affectionately and get the affection he needs after he's made me angry and miserable and embarrassed for him: I feel as if I dislike him a lot—how can I hug him? Then his breathing gets loud. "Oh, you're a real brat," he says, "you're a beaut." The room is dark, it's bedtime, he stands there.

But I began to be uneasy. I asked Momma if she liked me. She said, "Now, now, you know I love you—" I became vilely uneasy: that was the sort of thing that someone said when they were going to leave you, when they weren't being honest. I preferred an obvious love clearly marked on someone's face.

One could not play a game, a child's game—play it hard—and keep one's mind on one's suffering at home. There was a peculiar mental thing that happened when it was time to go home, when you were called or when players started to disappear; or you were picked up by your mother and driven home: there was an alteration in the nature of time, of history, a change of scale, accompanied by an almost overwhelming sense of faithlessness and of longing which one could erase with the passion or the refinement of the hug one gave one's par-

ents when one got home. To home's immensity. One had played, the game had ended: one had rushed along the sidewalk—or one dawdled—toward this other story.

Or in reverse, one ran away and played. One visited in neighbors' houses. One never had to boast—the neighbors did it for me. One could turn in any direction and find a hero's happiness.

The child, at home while his parents are getting ready for dinner, languishes

on a porch glider, bending his back, among the cushions, unobserved; he is being giddily vain, spine-and-neck-and-one-leg-bent: he is *feeling*—or thinking—he is *very smart*. (A LOT OF PEOPLE

SAID SO.) His feeling lay around him like peeled sheets of obtrusively royal raiment.

One's blood raced, slowed, raced again; a mass of sprinters, caterpillars shoot along inside; caterpillars, invisible ones, crawl on prickling skin.

Another time, Nonie and I are laying out pads on the dining-room table: *oh, I remember that*: one half smiles. She is being a child—or childish—out of bitterness, in a spasm of competition: she doesn't dare advance into adolescence and leave the field of childhood to me.... One remembers the eyes of the girl, the feel of one's own shirt, of buttoned cloth over one's chest, the movement of one's foot on the shifting pile of the carpet, the smells of the house, of dinner, of these expensively made pads. Nonie "knows," she feels the presence of circumstances available to her, waiting for her if only I did not exist. But I do exist in that room; the objects in the room include *my* eyes, *my* breath. She loves-and-hates me all the time, whereas I am largely indifferent to her or ashamed of her. I have won out for the moment....

LEILA described my real mother as "a very fine woman."

Leila said, "Your mother never had any luck—not any that lasted—and without luck what good did all her qualities do her?"

I really had forgotten my real mother. And that there was another family, other than the Cohns: my family—I remembered none of them. Then Leila and S.L. called in my real family, to share me with them, to share the responsibility, the expense, and perhaps the glory. Most likely, vengeance and a wish to handle me both were involved. Many of my real family were what Leila called "ignorant people"—un-



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lettered, not very clean, violent (my real father had threatened to shoot S.L. if I wasn't given back post-haste)—and no psychologist or referee was called in to oversee or advise—I was to be taught a lesson, I think.

After all, wasn't Daddy, S.L., angry as a lover often is? Sometimes, perhaps always, people when they love you can't really care what happens to you if it's not going to be in their arms, so to speak, or give them solace.

Leila resisted and said the thing wasn't a good idea. She mentioned future earnings, the dubious respectability of this enterprise, the social advantages of a bright son now, in the suburb where we lived. But Daddy was firm; he did not want to "steal" me, he said—and Leila's sister and Nonie, of course, were fervently in favor of giving me to someone, anyone. I kept passing through rooms, or lolling idly in doorways, listening, and then being sent away, having heard scraps of argument, none of which I understood at all: "real family," "he doesn't belong here," "his father." I imagined no evil.

When I was told clearly that I was to see my "real father again," it was by Leila and in front of company, where my pride would not let me show fear or consternation or anything but what a fine boy I was. What crap. By the time the company left, I was in a state. I knew something "bad" was happening. What did this mean, I asked. I don't like it. I don't want to do this, I argued.

S.L. took me on his lap and said in my ear that I would *love* my real father; he said my real father was "better-looking" than S.L. was, and that he, my real father, would "buy you ice cream and cake, all you can eat, and lots of books, and all the toys in the world." S.L. ran off at six in the morning of the day the meeting was to take place; and Leila would not let me meet my father in the house: "If I let him in, he'll kill me; he has a terrible temper and he hates me. . . ." She *pushed* me out the front door and locked it. I went alone to the curb to meet my real father. I was too proud to have hysterics in the neighborhood, where I was so well known and admired. So I behaved bravely. But I was uneasy.

I had imagined that a "better-looking" man than S.L. would be taller than S.L. and have a craggier and more serious face, and gentler and clearer and more knowing eyes. My father, an ex-boxer, and currently a junkman, was short, broad, not clean,

and he looked like an angry or ferocious, squirrel-faced *clown*, with sunk-en eyes, heavily shadowed and small, and almost no lips, and a small, misshapen nose. He spoke broken English, always in a shout. He could not read or write—he could not read street signs, for instance. He purposefully yelled at and threatened and terrified everyone he could—it was a joke and a matter of necessary ego to him. *His* father had been a scholar, so there was some psychological black magic, rebellion at work in what my father was, in what he had become: "I killed t'ree men in *mein* life," he said boastfully, menacingly, maybe apologetically as well. "You do what I tell you," he said. He spoke only in a shout until one's head rang; he said, "YOU GOT TA LUV ME, I'M YOUR POP!"

At first, uneasy as I was (at having been pushed out the front door and at not being able to guess what was polite in this case and what any of this meant), I wasn't afraid of him but only uneasy, as I said: I thought him silly, like a clown, like the clown he resembled, and I did not feel any similarity or kinship. I felt some embarrassment, though. When he threatened to hit me if I did not call him "Pop," I told him I would shout for help and tell the police I was being kidnapped; and there was enough difference in the way we looked for him to think the police would make trouble, and he gave in, he deferred to me on that.

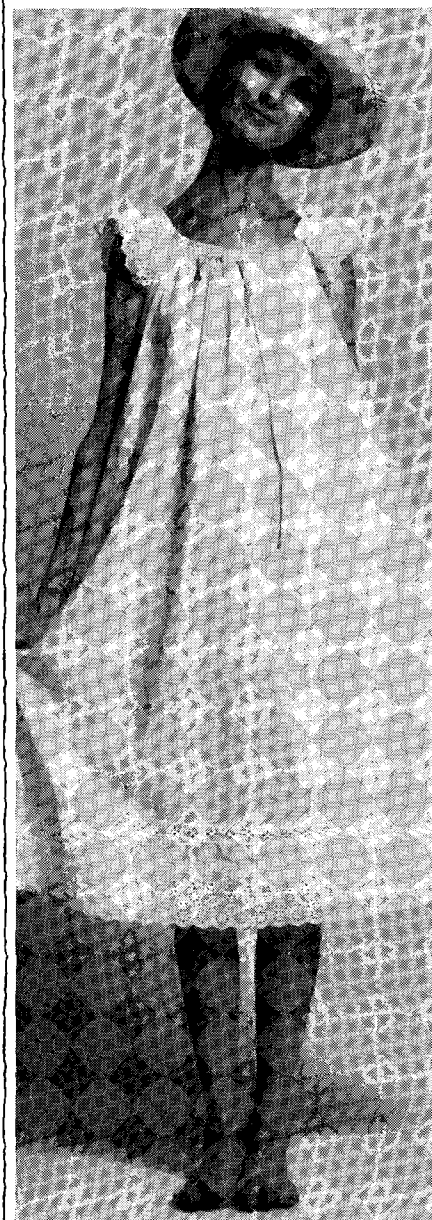
He said his feelings were hurt, and I was too polite to say so what, but that's what I felt.

He insisted on buying me clothes—he said the clothes the Cohns had given me were disgusting. I wanted to be polite. I let him buy me clothes and re-dress me; the clothes were ugly and itchy, and he wanted me to wear a hat that looked like a grownup's: that was too foolish, I thought, and I refused that. He wanted me to have my hair cut and to start speaking Yiddish immediately—

I think he intended me for the Chassidic rabbinate, under pressure from his relatives, and to excuse his invasion of my life at this time as a rescue of me for God.

He had some relatives I liked—I later met them—but he also had a virulent, curse-hurling harridan of a sister. (She said to me years later, "You know what keeps me alive? Hate. I know how to hate.") This harridan called down curse after curse on S.L. and Leila—death and rot, cancer and pain without end—and she

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threatened to curse me if I didn't immediately love her and the rest of my new family, if I did not become "a real Jew" at once and stop loving the Cohns and wanting to go home.

I might have borne that, and even the smell of her house—dust and cabbage and animosity—but they kept speaking of my dead mother; and that meant a shaky grief and obstinacy that I could not and would not face but would endure with lessening strength. They spoke of what my "real" mother wanted me to do—from the grave—and of how much she had loved these two and loathed Leila. There was no real mother for me—only a skeleton rotting in the ground. If part of me remembered her, that part too found these mentions of the actuality of that woman insupportable; and then the threats these people made never to return me to the Cohns at all but to keep me forever mingled with that woman's shadow, or, rather, with the shadow of the irreconcilable infant grief, and the fact that *they would not listen to me* made me throw up. I couldn't stop. This frightened me and them, and they took me home, but I was ill by then, genuinely ill, and out of my mind in a childish way. (I had lasted about ten hours.)

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CHILDREN, gathered on my lawn or on nearby lawns, waiting for me to play, saw me through windows, crying, being carried to bed, covered with vomit. I stank of fear, really. The memories I have of that return (and of the months that followed) are black, scorched. I yelled at Leila, "DO YOU KNOW I DON'T LIKE THIS? DON'T YOU CARE?"

Momma said, "Leave me alone—I can't face this. Go talk to your father."

I ran to S.L., a tear-splattered, beslobbered, vandalized child; and I yelled, "DADDY, BE NICE! HELP ME, DADDY!"

And he said, "Don't be a whiner—I can't stand a whiner—" He was embarrassed: he would not look at me: what had he expected to happen? He said, "Don't act like this—don't be a snob—I can't stand snobs. . . ." He said it over and over.

MOMMA, as I said earlier, often spoke of her looks as being in defiance of a world of what people did to her—in return, you had advantages—but meanwhile you had to bear up under storms and against storms: she used to say, "*I haven't lost my nerve.*"

Well, I lost mine.

A childish cure. I will be fat, and then only true lovers will fight over me. I will be ugly. I will be silent.

I stopped playing with other children—how could I *play*? One is worried: one wants to be an ugly child—unlooked at. I wanted to spare the other children. I wanted no more jealousy. I wanted only one family. One becomes afraid to sleep: dreams are not tactful.

In my case, childish hate became a matter of dying—I did not like having to die. I think my old self died—largely so, anyway.

So—to be melodramatic myself—the Cohns watched the destruction of the personality they had helped give me. They took it back, in a sense. The child presented himself as dull, unwilling to leave the house—that sort of thing—and very ugly, and then he said, “You’re my parents—why don’t you love me?”

Often I played at being very stupid—I loved and hated them *in this way*—by being ugly and much, much, much smarter than they were. I would suddenly show them how smart I was; and then I would be silent and wait to see if they regretted anything, if they had learned to love me yet in this new guise.

I would say, “I only want one father and one mother,” but they refused to understand. Sometimes they turned on me and threatened to put me in the Orphans’ Home—and one time they did. Sometimes I was scared of them and then I think I intended to make myself a pure Cohn, to placate them that way. And since Leila was not very steady, and S.L. was S.L. . . . I became . . . very strange. Perhaps I did get to be like them.

To carry out my imitation, I did not take my eyes or senses off the Cohns for a minute.

I was, in a way, as surprised as everybody else that I became so strange, but I did not stop being important to the families: my fate weighed on everyone, including me: this gave me some satisfaction.

I wouldn’t talk in school, to anyone—except occasionally I would answer questions from the teacher that she asked another child, one who was too embarrassed to answer or not able to answer. I took care of my class intellectually; they were my parish.

Psychiatric treatment was offered. Two psychiatrists: one I simply disliked and would not talk to at all; the other did not believe me. He probably would have in time, but he did not say what I wanted to hear: “The Cohns are

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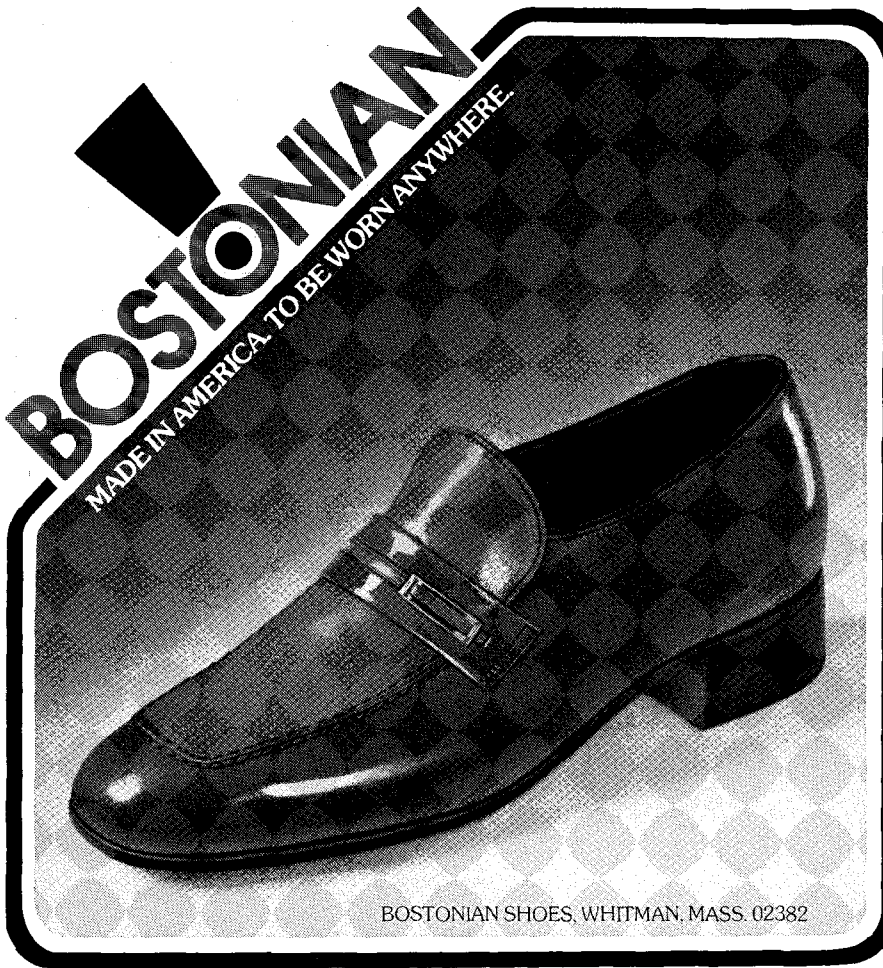
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your real parents; that is your real home." So I snubbed him. I was too bright, too sensible when I chose to be, for my opinions to be ignored, even though I was a child. The psychiatrist pompously retreated.

Meanwhile, Momma—Leila—who was increasingly selfish about money and strange in her own life—was more and more polite, openly affectionate toward me as toward a visitor, toward someone who wasn't so lucky after all, who was maybe worse off than she, Momma, was, than she, Momma, was as she aged. She made it quite clear, though, that she disliked my suffering—it was my stubbornness she admired, the victories I won in being ill (I made *everyone* leave me alone). The worst of this partial return to life was that I had an ineradicable sense of cowardice—the Cohns had made me afraid. I began to talk, however—this was after about six months of silence and fatness—to neighbors: only grownups. I was very polite, uncertain, then suddenly loud—but they liked me anyway. Meanwhile, everything S.L. said to me struck me as unendurably stupid and not worth listening to: I'd listen to him with a look of disgust. He seemed weary—he disgusted himself. He left Momma three times that winter.

Defiantly, I went back to being smart in school. I read the textbooks the first day of classes, and that was that. If a child asked me to explain something, I would. When a teacher addressed me, I might or might not be rude and show contempt for her vocabulary, evasions, or the dizzy fuzz of her explanations. Teachers said I was "a terror"—even so, some were fond of me, and no one among the children I knew or had known ever turned on me or did more than mention with surprise, expecting an explanation of, my new ugliness. Perhaps they needed me because I explained school subjects to them. Maybe they were an uncruel bunch of children.

Maybe I was unusually tough—or lucky—or a horror. But I never did have to suffer in some ways as much as some kids did. Any number of kids in my class were unhappier and more helpless than I was, except at moments, at the worst moments. Then I felt I was a mongrel, a dog—a mangy one.

Sometimes the parents of the kids in the class would defend me—they'd go to school and remonstrate with a teacher or with S.L. and Leila about me, although I hadn't asked them to, and hadn't complained; sometimes their concern was that I ought to be placed in a higher grade because they thought their children were being overshadow-

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owed and I was being "*wasted*," but they were also very often kind for no other reason except kindness. Sometimes they liked something I said, or my tense ugliness, or something I did, some quirk of behavior, violent or non-violent, in me. They'd shake their heads over my parents—I brought a good deal of dislike on Leila and S.L. from others, and enmity from people who worried about me. Leila said, "Let them adopt you—let's see how long they can stand it."

Mostly at school I sat quietly in my seat and stared out the window.

The worst time felt black and poisonous. I woke up each morning as if I was rising to my knees in a black, tarry, poisonous pit. I dressed myself sloppily, crazily. Momma made me redress myself often. One Saturday, Momma said, "Get some fresh air. You can't sit around inside all day—I get enough blame as it is."

Dully, I sat on the front steps, but when other kids appeared I went and vanished, so to speak, down a driveway, across a back yard—alone, demented, wretched. I observed very little—some sheets being aired on grass, some pretty-colored brick in sunlight. It was hard to walk: I dragged along, all coordination gone.

In a park, a large park, nearly empty—because it was reputed to be dangerous—amid the trees and sunlight, there came to me a sense that I was alone. Bedded in my stale agony in that tree-y emptiness, in the slowness of time there, I did not scream when three black boys suddenly jumped on me from behind some bushes; and in my deadness I did little more than stare at them when they started to beat me. But my staring stopped them; they ran away; they hadn't hurt me. I walked on, heavily, gasping for breath, asthmatic—with as yet unfaded terror. Then I saw a wad of violets, in bloom, at the foot of a tall tree that had a plaque on it that said "Red Oak"—some such thing.

I think I had come to believe, as some natural clock ticked away several months of gradually stabilizing agony, that there was to be no rescue for me ever.

I was, I think, actually crazed with fear; anyway, fearful: and yet I was calm about it. The wind blew and moved my hair; that startled me; everything was swollen with elements of the incomprehensible-to-me left over from the events in the Cohns' house.

When I saw the violets, what I felt, first, was hopelessness: then interest of a tired kind. I knelt—and looked: for a while, my senses wouldn't register with any orderliness what I saw; I had to *touch* the flowers to see them: my sensual deadness was familiar—and even reassuring—like a pillow gone flat and a little smelly: there was a balance—one hovered at nothingness. Then perhaps the memory of an old embrace or pleasure, or a current boredom with insanity, tilted the balance; I touched the flower: slowly its purple-ness grew clear to me. After a long time, I smelled the odor of the violets. I began to shake quite a bit. I lay down and put my cheek on the violets as on a pillow. Or as on a mother. I put my lips on them—to taste, not kiss. I brushed them with my open eyes, then slowly—it was more pleasant—with my eyelids. I felt coolness in the ground under me, coolness on my fat stomach. Haltingly, with blurs, I became aware of the hues and shapes of the petals of the violets until they filled my eyes and mind and of the odor until it filled my nose and lungs—until a sense of them filled *me*.

It seemed to take forever, to involve an interminable mathematics, this restoration of order to the senses and the mind. Bone and muscle attempted to pull themselves together to support this mental suppleness. It seems too elaborate to say it like this, but what happened felt to me as if the unhappiness had been *willed*, and therefore I could fight it if I chose: I could do it; almost easily, but gracelessly, I lay and looked at the violets for a long time and saw them clearly as I willed. I see them still, the defenselessness, the unparentedness of them.

"Go on," I said to myself, "if flowers can do it, and they don't last very long—people are really terrible to them—you can do it, go ahead, live, just live, go ahead, live."

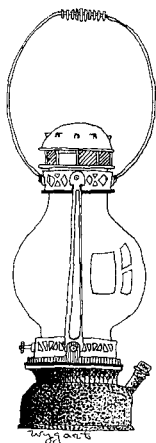
It was a secret, a boy's secret. No one knows how to take care of you—you're a monster—but go ahead and live anyway.

It's all right to be a monster.

A child adopts childish reasons: childish reasons have to serve in one's childhood—that's what childhood is.

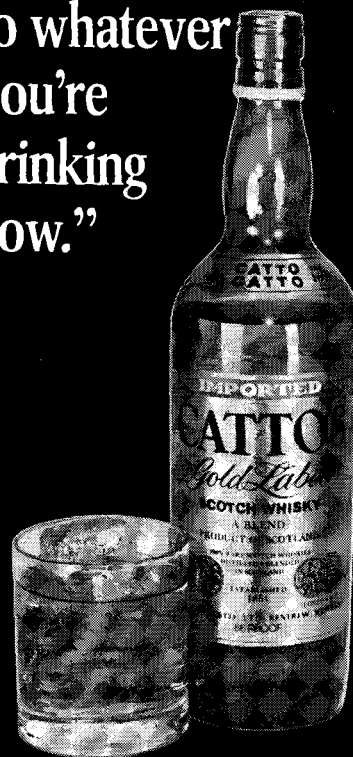
OF course, I had changed. And, oddly, I knew it—I did not expect other children to be like me.

I found I still had a position in the school. When an anti-Semitic teacher attacked me as having undue influence



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on the other children, they still stuck by me—after all, the anti-Semitic teacher was powerful in their lives only for a year but I'd be with them through high school to help with homework; and even for the present year they couldn't understand her unless I translated what she said to them. Also, no matter how unlikely it sounds they liked me, and they weren't sure they liked her unless I said she was terrific.

In school, I did not speak and was not addressed—it was too hard for the teachers to deal with me. Sometimes they gave me special work; they could not grade it, however; they would get flustered. When I read the textbooks the first day of school, I did not consciously remember what I read but when something was mentioned I would see, usually, the page in the textbook where that thing had been discussed, all the words on that page—and even the clouds or rain or sun outside the window that I had glanced at when I looked up from reading—and I could explain the textbook and point out where it differed from what the teacher said—things like that—and when it was most advisable to follow the textbook and when it was better to listen to the teacher: I told my classmates things like that.

I worried some about speech, about saying things that would be applicable, that would be worth someone's trying to understand what you were saying.

If I did speak in class, the other kids, as if electrified by a current, attached themselves to what I said. The teachers were good, often, but they spoke a school language, a dreary mandarin American that only kids who were the sons or daughters of teachers spoke. I spoke various middle-class Americans, and recess American (shouts, hurried explanations), and local, street, or dirty American; and in play I spoke literary *English*. I taught the kids after school on a street corner; I was a child, and often—not always—knew why they didn't understand whatever it was that frightened them in the lesson. I knew their lives—to some extent. I was them-plus-me; and they were me-and-them plus and minus things. When I went to another school—when we moved a few years later—it didn't happen like this. I mean this was just that one school where I'd been since kindergarten. They knew me and were used to me.

Because they were sometimes blamed for the way I was being brought up and because the kindness of

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people to me made them uneasy, both Nonie and Momma got to a point of hysteria, of giddy defiance, especially about me not learning anything fancy or getting ahead of myself: those are their terms. They were in a funny position. They were victors in a way—Daddy was having a nervous breakdown and was afraid of them, and I clung to the house, I spurned outside kindness, I was afraid of them—and yet they were sinking, the ground under their feet dipped lower and lower every month: they were victors-going-under. It must have seemed crazily unfair, eerie, to them.

After school, after I gave the necessary lesson, kids would beckon me or invite me to play, but I wouldn't play with them. I hurried home, I lumbered home, a monstrous child, a dog.

Often, quite often, I had bouts of murderous rage toward my parents by adoption; I felt it inwardly, only inwardly: a scalding thing—grief and hatred.

I was trying to love the Cohns, so far as I knew; but it was interesting that the more dependence I showed toward them, the more blame they received for my condition; the women Momma courted blamed her. With the greatest and dullest politeness, with a squat, ugly child's toadlike loyalty, I yet managed to accuse her nearly every minute of an enormous failure toward me. I managed, while being "a good son," to make her failures patently visible.

Possibly revenge is curative. Or time. I don't think I was much more miserable than other children: I think in a way I enjoyed my childhood.

WHOEVER I played with, I was careful of him, of his pretenses.

Anyone I liked or spent time with became, in a way, educated, became the second-smartest person in class and was quickly elected to things and was more important to the other kids than he had been before he was my friend.

And when I dropped them, they slowly sank through the class and were . . . oh . . . semi-ruined . . . intellectually: only intellectually.

I remember one boy: he liked me—he hated me; he waited for me to come see him; he hated me if I escaped from him, if I didn't love him; he was afraid of me; then at moments he wasn't—and so on. I couldn't tell if that was "normal"—I didn't know anymore.

Nonie wanted me to appear to like her, to adore her if possible. But I dis-

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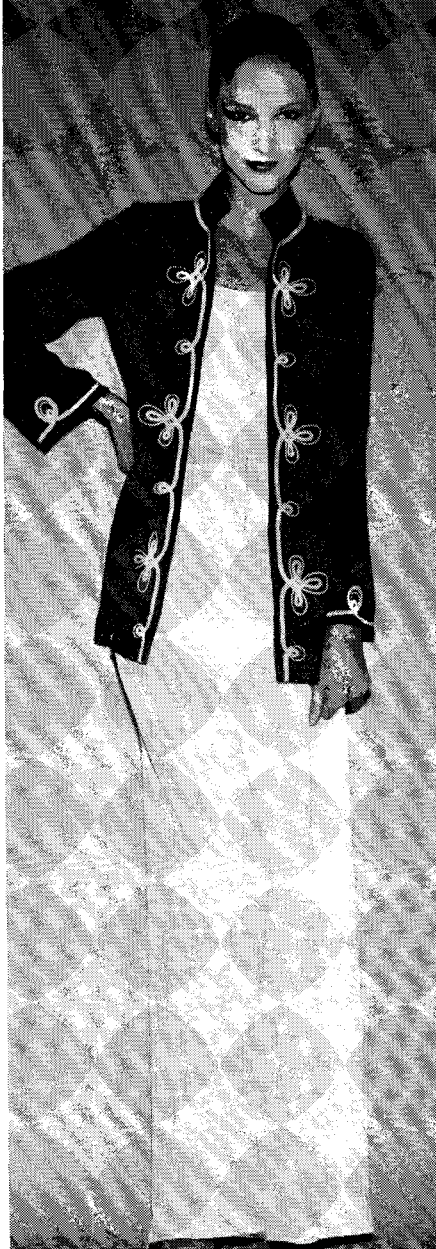
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A white streak
in the night. Me,
in an elegant jumpsuit,
and it's from

*Saks
Fifth
Avenue*

liked her; she bored me; and it showed. "Why can't we be a normal family?" she would scream, meaning why couldn't I as a *younger* brother admire her? I think I managed thoroughly to hurt her.

She needed me for the sake of her reputation, perhaps for merely human reasons. Some people did like her because they disliked what I stood for—elitism, intellectual luck: I can't define *what* they thought.

I tried to care about Nonie, but she was always the same, threatening me with a hot iron, trying to lock me in the closet, so the hell with her. I don't see how it could have been otherwise.

Sanity is rough, is dirty. At least, as I knew it.

THEN real happiness returned—in a special guise.

A boy I had tutored in reading, and who now revelled in being the second-brightest, or even apparently the brightest, kid in the third grade (since I did not compete), and a girl who had liked me in kindergarten when I'd been the boy who was so handsome—she'd run in games when I ran, always a half step behind me and solemn—and who'd always been half loyal but a little surprised, a little betrayed when I turned ugly, liked me a lot again; now that I had a good friend (his name was Meynell), she attached herself to me again. Or I accepted her. Again.

Her name was Laura. She had been bored. She was sombre, freckled, erect, with a milky look and very heavy purple-red hair and purple, or violet, eyes. Grownups admired her. Meynell was in local suburban terminology "an imp" (a woman would cast about for a word to describe him and then come up with that one and would be very proud). The three of us met every morning before school; we looked at each other every few minutes in school; we were known for our friendship—friendship and happiness are legendary. Laura's parents thought we were too close (one time, in a garage, she lifted her skirts and showed me herself; I showed her myself; we were very calm, unobscene, except I did kiss her belly, and one of her knees). Also, we played Torture a lot, the three of us, pretending to interrogate each other, pretending to break each other's spirit. We screamed and writhed—in pretend resistance, in practice for pain.

I was not allowed to have my friends come to the house very often, nor did I want them to. Nonie could not bear it—and my friends found Momma, Daddy, and Nonie odd, perhaps detestable.

I entered the lives of my friends, and to an extent shared their parents. Older children knew about us—we were envied, liked, smiled at, teased. The three of us together could bear most of that easily. There was a kind of excitement whenever, after a separation—at recess, overnight—we met; we were sharply bitten by pleasure in each other and the intertwined affections; we hopped as if bitten by mosquitoes. Laura did not play many games, but she would talk, and she would climb things—onto garages or up into trees. Also, sometimes she would be allowed to play outside in the dusk, on swings, or we would simply run and she would spread her arms and open her mouth and explain—pantingly—later, "I was eating the darkness." Meynell and I played marbles, mumblety-peg, running games, street hockey, primitive baseball, stoop ball, games of imagination: his mother said, "They're closer than brothers." The intensity was such that for a while everything gave way before us—family schedules, rules at school. Daddy wanted to make peace now—it was as if he wanted to touch this happiness—he offered peace on his terms: I was to be

a very young loving child; he liked baby talk, stuff like that. He did not understand. Nor did Leila, who was forbearing *and* jealous. Sometimes wicked—but we fought her off.

Momma said, "I don't see how Alan does it—he has a gift for coming up smelling like a rose."

Momma said to me, "It will never be me who will get the credit for anything you do."

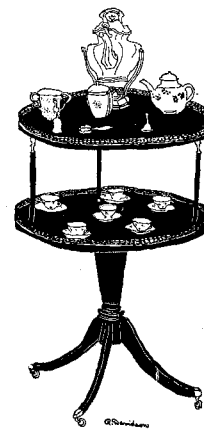
She said, "Make it easy for the rest of us—be ordinary; it won't hurt you; don't try so hard."

I did not try at all, as far as I knew.

Momma and Daddy were sad but, on the whole, kinder to me. Momma said, "That child is lucky—I don't know where he gets his luck: he didn't inherit it from me."

Momma said to me, "You talk like a book—that wins people over."

She and Daddy were increasingly unhappy in their lives. Momma said, "Sometimes I think it's not right for life to be like this."



Mothers of my friends, Jewish women—not the Gentile ones—would sometimes say something like “I never did like Leila Cohn.”

Such women often angled to have me as a friend for their children, but I already had Meynell and Laura; and I was *kind* to other children but no more than that. Still, I was part of Momma’s social leverage—I could help her if I chose. She needed me. She knew I knew that. Usually I wouldn’t help her. She accepted her defeat. She said, “I know, you already have your friends—I wouldn’t trust them if I were you. . . . If I were you, I’d listen to me. . . .”

She said, “I don’t want you to be smart and despise women—don’t ever look down on women: brains aren’t worth it.”

Of other families and women Momma would say, “You wouldn’t like them so much if you lived with them—they wouldn’t let you get away with things the way I do; they’d put a stop to your gallivanting around.” That was partly true: my situation with the Cohns forced them to give me, willy-nilly, a great deal of freedom.

Meynell’s mother suggested I live with them a few days a week; at first, Meynell was wildly agreeable, but then he grew jealous—his jealousy grew and grew and grew: how could it fail to grow? He said, “You’re wonderful and I love you a lot, but I’m silly and I get along with people better than you do.” He didn’t really.

A teacher joined herself to Meynell’s unease with me: she said that I dominated Meynell, that he would not get a chance to develop properly if he was anywhere near me. He began to say he wanted to be “equal friends” with a lot of boys.

With Laura, the issue was my being Jewish—a Jesuit uncle of hers objected to the influence I had with her; her parents had become fond of me, but they too felt Laura and I were too close, that she listened to me and not to them.

At first, Laura fought her parents, but then she gave in; and she liked my sadness at losing her. She could not help smiling sometimes.

Meynell said, of himself, he was too “wild” to be a good friend to me. I said, “No, you’re not.” He said, “We shouldn’t be such close friends: we shut everyone out.” I said, “No, we don’t.” He said, “You should have other friends.” I was sorry I loved him.

To some extent, they had to return to the friendship and did, as long as

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they remained in the suburb—who can surrender happiness easily? But now everyone was troubled.

Momma said, "See: you're hard for everyone—you're hard *on* everyone."

Laura's family moved from the suburb, as did Meynell's, the following year—it was a solution of sorts.

There was an atmosphere around my childhood of its being kind of a joke. Perhaps that's true for most children.

Momma said, "I tell you things, but you don't listen. Don't show anyone you're smart: stop being such a fool; I'll admit you may be smart, but no one can stand it."

Sometimes she treats me like a brother or a form of husband, unsatisfactory but better than Daddy and more available for certain purposes.

She said a hundred times or more, "I don't want him to be a genius! I have no interest in those things! I want him to be happy! Geniuses die young! They're not lucky in love! Let him be selfish, let him have a good time. Talk to *me*: I'm the interesting one around here. . . ."

I was a rigid, muscular, tense-faced boy, with odd, squinting eyes, a perpetual look of a resigned jokester's agony—with a peculiar power of ingratiating. Ugly and proud and secretive and often ashamed, domineering in a silent, inconvertible way. If I fight Momma publicly, she—oh, all life drains from her: she says, "Don't let the neighbors know everything—this isn't nice—*please stop*."

I am a policeman . . . a young boy . . . foul, willful, secular—I can taste it in my mouth, how secular I am. What a joke I am. A *local* child. Nothing else. Leila's.

If Nonie tries to pick on me, I say, "Leave me alone—or I'll lie about you." (A lie is designed to be spoken and so is easier to understand and often to believe than a stumbling attempt to relate something that really happened: what happened is not designed to be spoken of.)

Momma says, "You always have to win."

I said to Nonie once, "You're a real mess: when you're honest and really act the way you are you're disgusting, and when you lie you're a jackass."

Still, she will come to me sometimes for comfort, for help against Momma or Daddy.

I am going to make it through my childhood, it looks like.

There is something about Momma's life, a dissatisfaction, a distortion—it is partly gender, partly a blackmail she

practices, partly a simple truth—so that it is wrong to triumph over her.

She exaggerates and suffers from and is caught in her differences from me, from everyone. . . . She does not like "chivalry."

If I ask Daddy for something he can't give me, if I persist until some dream he has of himself is wrecked, he will say bitterly, "Do you want to turn us all into your slaves?"

He was tired of masculinity. His own. Mine. All men's.

I am not Momma's child; I will outlive her, I have better luck than she does, but she has to take care of me meanwhile anyway and make me *happy*—such generosity: so unlikely; that is the style for mothers, Jewish mothers, in this suburb; it is a requirement for social acceptance. She and I know that in my surviving in the way I did lay her social credit. . . . I am aware that in some complicated, ill-informed way the world operated more sweetly on my senses than it did on hers—not when I was depressed but most times. She was in a rush, she was tense, she was *not entirely well*. She will say to me, "Give me a helping hand—do you want the school, do you want your father to be mad at me?"

She will say, "I warn you—don't be mean to me, be kind, or you'll get your comeuppance."

She will explain to me, "Women have hard lives—try to understand what I'm saying—I have a lot to aggravate me, I—" She will go on in a mild, not really direct voice: sometimes she doesn't look at me but talks to herself; usually, though, she looks at me; and what she is saying is sensible enough, even if I can't quite make it out; but the real thing is her eyes, her gaze, is her will-you-listen-to-me-or-not. It is immensely personal: the comparative heaviness—of her haunches—her neck, her slightly crumpled skin—her *me-what-are-you-going-to-do-about-me-you-there-the-boy-in-this-house*.

When I was successful at something in my life as a child, or if I was ill and helpless, Momma would look at me and it was touch and go if she would decide she wanted me to survive.

Sometimes I minded it that she had free choice in such a matter: *she's not a good mother*, I would think. I didn't want her to have free choice in such a matter: we don't want to hope they will love us—that they will encourage us to live—we want it to be a law, separate from our good and evil and belonging only to *their* good and evil.

Politeness, with a faint note of fear

and respect, was the best thing you could get, I thought when I was a boy. I got it sometimes.

How much pain can you stand, Momma?

Momma could only help proud people—she told me so: she said to me, "I'll tell you a secret about me: don't come to me when you're hurt; learn to take care of yourself; learn to be brave; you have to be brave—and not be hurt—and then I can help, then I *want* to help—oh, I'm a real woman—or maybe I'm not."

My life had a vaguely jocular, rough, not too sensible quality to me, but so did hers to her: she said, "I'll tell you a good one: I used to be Delilah, but when you get older you have to do all the work—that's what *my* mother always said, and I thought she was wrong but she was right—so I used to be Delilah and now I'm Samson, now I have to be Samson: don't you think that's a good one?"

V

WE are not to advance in time but to slide back now.

When I am running in the upstairs hallway and I come to the head of the stairs, to the trickily *folded* structure of the stairs, the issue arises of bravery.

Going downstairs is not a high point in my repertoire of physical skills. I sighed then, even as I ran, in those days—thin chest, small bones stretched with the sigh—at the approach of confronting the fact of this weakness, of this hole in my world, the I-can't-do-this-right-yet.

I do it anyway and often fall—occasionally head first or sideways. I slide on my heels from stair to stair; fall on my behind and bump from riser to riser: I have rolled down partway, recovered, risen, run again. Momma used to say, "He doesn't care if he hurts himself—"

But he did.

I learned something of the nature of the world, or mislearned it, when I plunged into the jolt and disorientation of falling on the stairs.

Being brave is an upsurging thing in your chest before you fall: I irresistibly love myself, in silence, sternly and completely, when I am brave.

Being brave gets you started on something, and then you just have to be stubborn and finish what you start.

When I can't rise as far as bravery, I go as far as stubborn slyness.

If I fall, I grunt, the wind is knocked out of me: I hear it, in an exquisite moral-immoral clutter (I may

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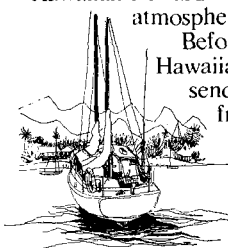
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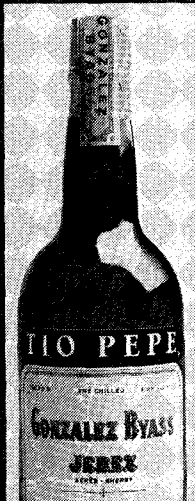
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Tio Pepe



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be making more work for Momma and Daddy, I may be killing their rose, their bouquet, the heart-of-the-house); I get up and run, a maybe dying child, galloping with some dexterity, and some no-dexterity, down these stairs. But if I sit on the stairs and lean against the rungs to wait for my breath to return, it is more loving toward my parents.

I suppose I always thought, with terror, with envy, with delight, that beauty was the knowledge of how not to die—at least, not yet. Beauty lives in some vivid way, corporeally, without stinginess, with death near. . . . The music of dead composers. . . .

The thumping of a falling child, the single thump of the limited fall of a slightly older child, the silence in the hall, the footsteps of a running child on the stairs.

At the landing, I grab the newel post and run, run in an arc. Then the whole house shudders, rises slightly, wheels, settles again as if a wind struck some huge fin on the roof, blew hard, and then stopped: but it is only me, running. I quickly correct the sensation of the house's turning—I know that much. I am well past the constant ageometric naïveté of the primitive time of no symmetries, of flat, busy surfaces, of knowing almost nothing.

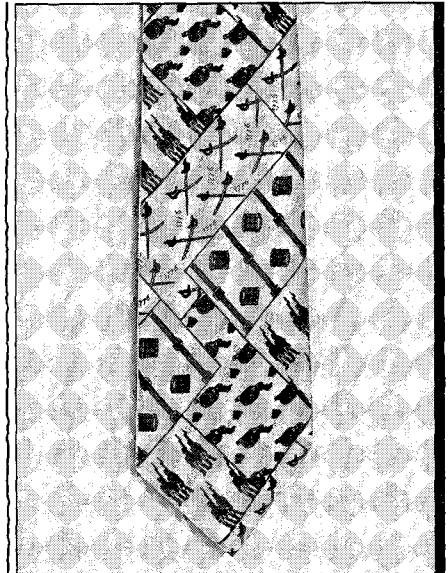
When I am still handsome, and Momma comes home and I am running down the stairs to get to her and she looks up and sees me, she is, even then, more than later, at once suspicious (later, when I am ugly, she is patient, pitying—not generous but kind).

She is in the lower hallway, by the table where she has placed her purse; she is loosening her clothes. Her beauty is still there, somewhat rotted, like a fading painted-wood fish. And she has the added beauty that my regard for her bestows.

I don't then or ever when I am a child understand how exhaustion shapes her life and Daddy's life, how exhaustion determines things for them as for armies during a battle, how it is that confusion from tiredness can be so great it is a form of sleep.

I know what shelter is worth.

As I run toward her, I can feel the darkness break from, pour out of, tumble out of her until we are in an excavation as I run, she and I—it is like being in a pit of earth, with the smell of earth, and all things hidden behind walls of earth, so complete it is, this seeing her; and her exasperation—from the day—her tiredness, her way of liking me that year, that month,



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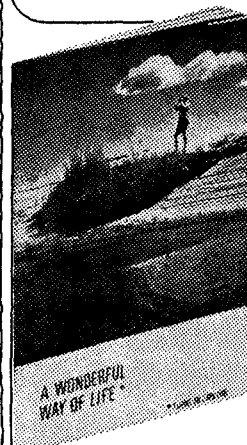
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these things, all of them dismay me and excite me if such words will serve: they stand around us like animals in a pit, a black horse, a wolf, a bear.

When I actually touch her, the pit vanishes: it is suddenly gray-ey, like a misty light on the ridge, where we are: the air is thickly feathered, puffy, padded, soft; something invisible, unnameable pulls at—my nerves—it is my sense of her, of what is happening; something pummels me—my own heart? Around us spreads the obscure, mist-riddled grayness, the obscure aura of our privacy, of the secrecy that is her special quality: we are mother and son: so far as I know.

My arms go partway around her hips. I have her in a net (the net is me). I feel the false layers, the false body, cloth-y and rubbery—buckles, seams, vast complications: she is a pile of clothes. There is a smell: one half remembers hair, a nightgown, the burning desert of a bed. One hears—her heartbeat, is it? . . . One is at the edge of a seashell—is that true?

Momma and I quite often irritate each other. *Oh, you*, the irritation goes, *oh, you are being really treacherous* (or *careless* or *tiresome*); and then it is: *oh-well-so-what-I-don't-really-mind*.

Sometimes one is aware of an apparently meaningless continuing passion—in one's self toward her powers, toward her; the blood of emotion swiftly flushes through me as if reddening me with the lyric and dramatic and mistaken knowledges she and I have of each other: her protection, my worth, my perpetual changeableness, and hers.

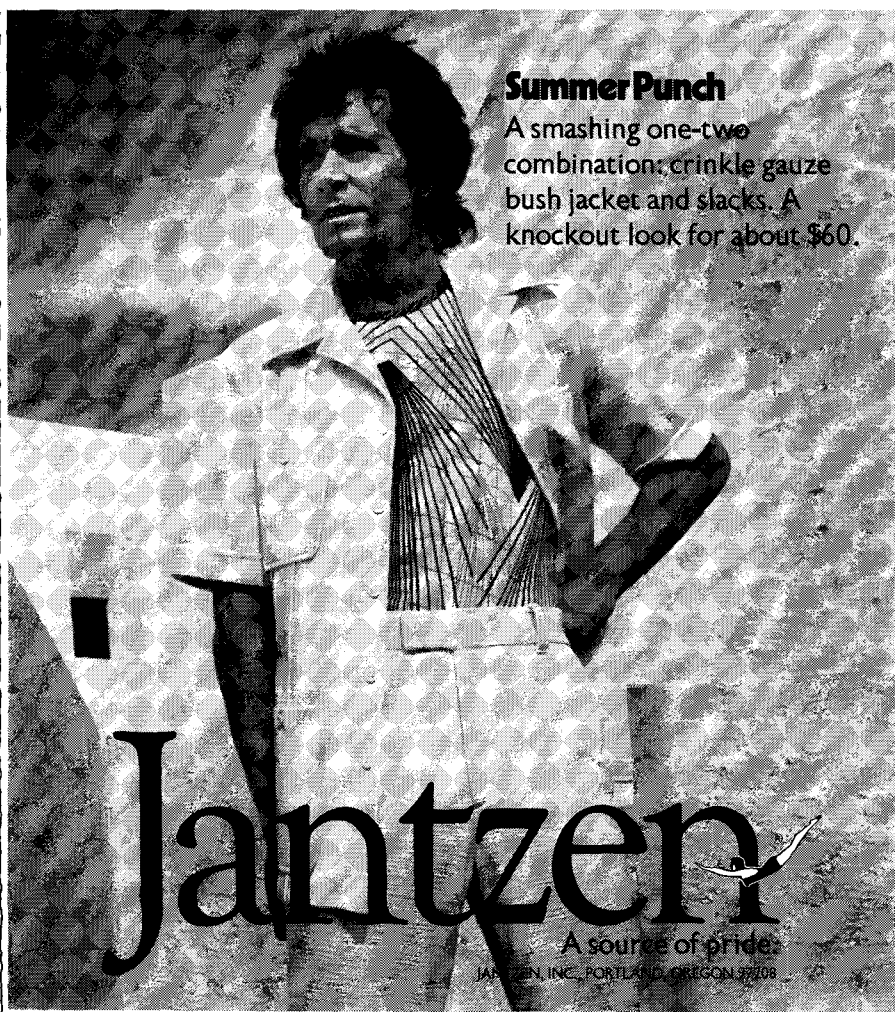
I am her shrunken and diminutive masculinity, on trust for the future: she is partly husband to me: I am, by obvious reasoning, her femininity as well—how the shadows cling.

There is no innocence in mothers—that's just a game.

My mother tends for many reasons, including the wish to influence judgment and opinion about her stewardship and rule, to say the equivalent over and over of *There are no crimes here except against me*.

It is much easier that way, more elegant by local standards; and also, it avoids pain. Part of influencing judgment is to call this Clytemnestrine absolution or whatever *making peace* and *making a home*.

Holding on to Momma, perhaps pleating her skirt with one hand, looking up into her face, I tell her that Nonie fought with Anne Marie, made a scene, threw a tantrum, made a mess in the kitchen, called Anne Marie



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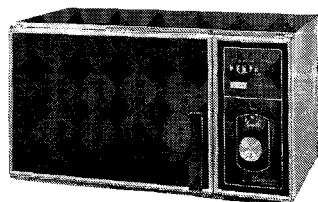
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"fat and ugly" and "said she was poor, said she was stupid. . . ."

I relate this loudly—in a childish manner—and am moral and indignant.

Momma is loosening—her underclothes, I think: anyway, her hands are inserted here and there, her arms hold strange postures, her eyes are distracted, her mouth slightly awry with the pain of feeling now how tired she is after the effort she has been making all afternoon, and with the minor pleasure of this beginning of private egoism, the nearly-absolute-smallness of the relief of this loosening. She is free of a number of pretenses she has to support all day: she is at home.

She answers me in a voice that has more to do with that and with the residue of her power and independence at luncheons and in club politics among inhabitants of the world than with what I'm saying.

She answers me in a voice, an inflection that chilled and prickled my skin (my blood) and darkened my skull.

She said, "Don't bother me with this—I don't want to be bothered: I just got home . . . fight your own battles, don't be a tattletale . . . I have enough on my mind. . . ."

Her lipstick is worn—is partly rubbed away; curved, oily scales, quite large, stick in two places; in another place the coloring is rubbed into the ridges of her lips; shadows make the color heartbreaking (to me).

I start to—*vibrate*—more or less (the enormities on Momma's chest, the big deh-deh-dehs, are being *lowered*: Momma straightens her back, fiddles with one hand hidden, her elbow bent in front of her; the big forward bulge settles, first one half of it, then the other): I vibrate with internal principle.

The idea I can't manage—the one that burns me most urgently—is that Nonie's crime was of no importance *now*—I hadn't a clear idea of *now*, of *this-time-before-sleep-intervenes*, this clear, yellowish, rocky landscape before the dark sea of sleep closes this era. I can't see that Nonie's crime and Momma's tiredness balance somehow: the idea of I-will-treat-it-as-a-crime-when-I-am-good-and-ready or when-I-have-more-energy—or the implication I-am-home-you-have-a-mother-aren't-you-grateful-for-that-isn't-that-enough-for-now—and the command love-me-welcome-me-leave-me-alone make me shake, literally: I sting with the electricity of the moral absolute. With what I have been taught so far and have guessed and seen of

how the future depends on setting things right, on adhering to moral absolutes now and all the time.

The importance to me of having Anne Marie protected and happy is so great I cannot believe Momma cannot care about it. Anne Marie's God is the haze that sunlight makes around her hair, her head. Her piety makes her steady: I see her triumph over headaches, impatience, and the like—she shares her steadiness with me: "*Komm her, Liebchen.*" I cannot understand Anne Marie, but I can love her and count on her schedule, so to speak. Her kisses almost never change in mood; or rather they change little and have few tones: each kiss is restrained; she holds back; I am not hers: her restraint is a form of art, of magic summoning up of how foolish we could be, of how restless I might get: it makes me laugh; it makes me solemn with dignity; the ungiven kisses fill me with delight—also dignity: I have to be taken care of! I am important!

She loves me, or so I feel. Also, I am her job. I have to supply good manners, courage, a sort of fineness of posture—I do those things for her.

She is the conscience of the house: "Not in front of Anne Marie," Momma often counsels us, and keeps us thereby from some momentarily attractive but ultimately demeaning sin.

Sometimes Momma says, with a sigh, "I forget it's my house."

She also says, "Without Anne Marie, I'd have no life of my own."

Anne Marie and Momma originally were co-conspirators: Anne Marie *loved* Momma; but now Anne Marie is somewhat impatient, "hoity-toity," Momma says, or patient in a way that suggests impatience toward Momma.

Anne Marie talks to me, she tells me things about herself, about God. "She's fascinated by the child," Momma said. "Well, I can't blame her—what else does she have in her life?"

And Momma says—cruelly sometimes (she is jealous of Anne Marie's piety and steadiness and abilities)—"Look, there they go." She whispers, "It's another case of Beauty and the Beast."

She says to me sometimes, "You're not good for Anne Marie—do you know that? You distract her from what she should be doing—she should be trying to get a husband."

Nonie cannot bear to see Anne Marie show any affection toward me.

Nonie goes crazy and accuses Anne Marie of slapping her, of stealing



money: when Nonie comes into the kitchen and I am there with Anne Marie, Nonie will start to make trouble, she will eat something Anne Marie has made for dinner, she will speak disrespectfully to Anne Marie, and when Anne Marie mutters or remonstrates openly, proudly, Nonie says, "I will tell Momma—I will lie."

Anne Marie was fat, self-righteous, not interested in much outside herself, and she was cruelly proud. Her pride nagged her: she may have been overweight and an immigrant, somewhat plain and without money, but she had God.

Momma would mutter, "She's *impossible*—she's wonderful, but she's *impossible*—she gives me a pain in my you-know-what."

Momma said publicly, "We owe everything to Anne Marie—we couldn't get along without her."

MOMMA is fascinating to me, a terrifying ally, mediocrally ferocious, mediocrally unreliable, as quick to grab your kingdom as not; she is darkened, grace-haunted, crime-absorbed, *interesting-to-me*.

Momma's tiredness is anarchic.

I strive with all my strength—as I vibrate—to *yank* her into the realm of the moral absolute.

"I'M NOT TATTLING! I'M TELLING YOU WHAT REALLY HAPPENED!"

Momma has no interest in what I say. There is a thicket in this hall: branches and shadows of her being home, of her mood, ramify, tangle, fill the air: I am a child in this thicket; she is—a sorceress taking pins out of her hair: she is gazing in the mirror at her sagged face, at her hair, dishevelled now; at what she sees.

"Don't pester me," she says.

I stare: it is inexpressibly foreign, what she is doing. I speak in the void of my staring at something I don't understand; I vibrate and speak of what Nonie did—but Momma is not listening; and unless I throw a tantrum and grab at or even hit her, unless I kick at the furniture, my speech is wasted, so wasted that it is as if speech is nonsense unless it is hooked at the other end to someone comprehending what you say. What I have just said is wrong *because* Momma didn't listen. I can speak louder and louder, but it is only like a dog's howling (unless she listens).

She said, "I told you I didn't want to hear any of that—I don't want to hear any more about it. Why don't you pay attention to what I say?"

It is inconceivable, it is like being wreathed in cobwebs; how she does it

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I don't know: she turns *me* into a trespasser. But I am a *knight*.

I shout at her, "MOMMA! NONIE SAID TERRIBLE THINGS TO ANNE MARIE!"

Momma sighs. "*And I told you to be quiet about it.*" She has turned away from the mirror; she picks up things from the hall table. "*Don't you know there's a time to keep your mouth shut?*" Then she says in an absently sugary voice, well mixed with boredom, "Your sister's turning into a teen-ager."

There is pity in her voice—for someone, for all of us, for herself. (I think Nonie was menstruating.) And in her voice is contempt for me—friendly contempt, strident, fearless. She says, "Did you eat your lunch today? Did Anne Marie take you outside this afternoon?"

Our conversations as a family, when we're all together, tend to be very limited: Nonie talks only about herself and her concerns, Daddy has his baby talk; Momma tends to be bored and restless.

But one of the things we do at the dinner table or in the car is feel sorry for people.

There were whole wonderful litanies: "I went shopping today—the saleswoman said I had a remarkable figure—I must say I felt sorry for her: she was so plain, and she..." Almost anyone or anything we discussed ended in our feeling sorry for them: our poor relatives, our rich ones, gangsters, gangsters' victims, famous people—they were heartless and on a merry-go-round and suffered because their children ran wild or went crazy or fell apart.

Nonie was particularly good at interpolating: "I feel sorry for the girls in my class—they don't know how to dress: they don't know any better." Or she said that of the poor: "They don't know any better."

Daddy would excoriate manufacturers for adulterating their products, but then he ended feeling sorry for them—and for all ruthless businessmen—because of "the terrible lives they lead—those rednecks, crooks on the make..." They're all fools..." Momma would interject that she felt sorry for the President's wife: "What kind of life is that for a woman: she's scared to death to open her mouth." We pitied Catholics, Baptists, Lutherans, Jews who were "religious and throw their lives away for nothing;" we pitied people who lived in cities and those who lived in very small towns—and it was sin-

cere, that pity: the ground we occupied was the only ground that didn't require pity.

"I feel sorry for Nonie, Momma," I said.

Momma said, "Your sister's not having an easy time of it: why do you have to be such a smart-aleck? You don't run this family—" Or: "I want you to shut up—do you hear me?"

At times, Momma turned her attention to Nonie and "liked" her no matter what. What she expected, then, was for Nonie to be enchanted with Momma for being a mother, infatuated with her almost (Momma used Nonie at times as a subsidiary husband); but Nonie was no longer "anyone's fool" (another phrase of Momma's) and she would resist Momma's blandishments—she would demand things from Momma instead.

Momma had what she called her sense of humor, but it was actually a form of rasping at you and making you do what she wanted without her having to give an acceptable moral reason for your being what she hoped you'd be. She would say to *me*, "I don't know how anyone stands you—Anne Marie is a sucker, if you ask me. What a pest you are. Don't you know you should take your sister's side no matter what? Everyone spoils you rotten. I think you have a mean disposition when you don't get your own way—you get your own way too much, if you ask me; you're Mr. Too-Big-for-His-Britches."

That afternoon, I was in pursuit of justice in the court of her authority.

She was partly flirting, or playing, with me, indulging herself with the—handsome—child, with his mind, his knighthood, after her afternoon of intrigue, finagling, shenanigans with other women.

She slips out of her shoes, picks them up—she is burdened now with her hat and purse and shoes, her suit jacket: she pads toward the living room. When she talks to me as she does now, her walk changes: she walks snappily, hipshot, in a walk at once incautious and a mockery—but I do not know what she is mocking: my pretensions perhaps; her own physical powers maybe... Momma.

She was being a real crook.

In one of our houses, the one on the ridge, the living room is kept dark during the day, the blinds drawn, and the curtains as well: light enters only from the dining-room archway, an indirect, floating, atop-the-ridge gray light that will not fade the furniture, the

lampshades, or the paintings. None of the furniture is much good, but it is arranged to suggest and does suggest a grandeur: that involved genuine skill of a kind. Momma's rooms were amazing; they were homey stage sets, lush, yet eminently respectable: the shadowy grandeur represented social rank, cleverness, a personal worth that she was modest about; but it was only "manners" for everyone else to ignore her modesty. If they accepted it, they were enemies.

She is checking the living room to see if it is ready for the evening tableau (for Daddy when he comes home): she doesn't want toys in the living room, or any evidence that children played there during the day; she wants fresh flowers in a vase near the end of the couch where she always sits.

I yell, "MOMMA, YOU'RE BEING BAD!" To make this jumble. This incoherence. I can't stand it that our life is like this. That my life is.

She half turns her head; she doesn't quite look at me, at the half-person, the blond semi-creature, the diminutive sensibility: she sticks out her tongue.

"MOMMA!"

"I don't think you're being too smart."

She meant I wasn't handling her well, so that while I might not be happy at the way things were going, if I kept on I'd be unhappier: she'd see to it.

I stamped my foot.

"My fine feathered friend, you listen to me. I'm giving you fair warning: don't you ever stamp your foot at me: you may be a little tin god with your playmates, but I'm warning you, this is my house. I run this house, and I don't want to be told what to do by anyone—I'm sick and tired of the subject—"

"MOMMA, YOU HAVE TO LISTEN!" (I cannot live otherwise: I will die otherwise.)

"You're getting on my nerves—"

"I DON'T CARE!"

"Take fair warning, my fine feathered friend—"

"I DON'T CARE!"

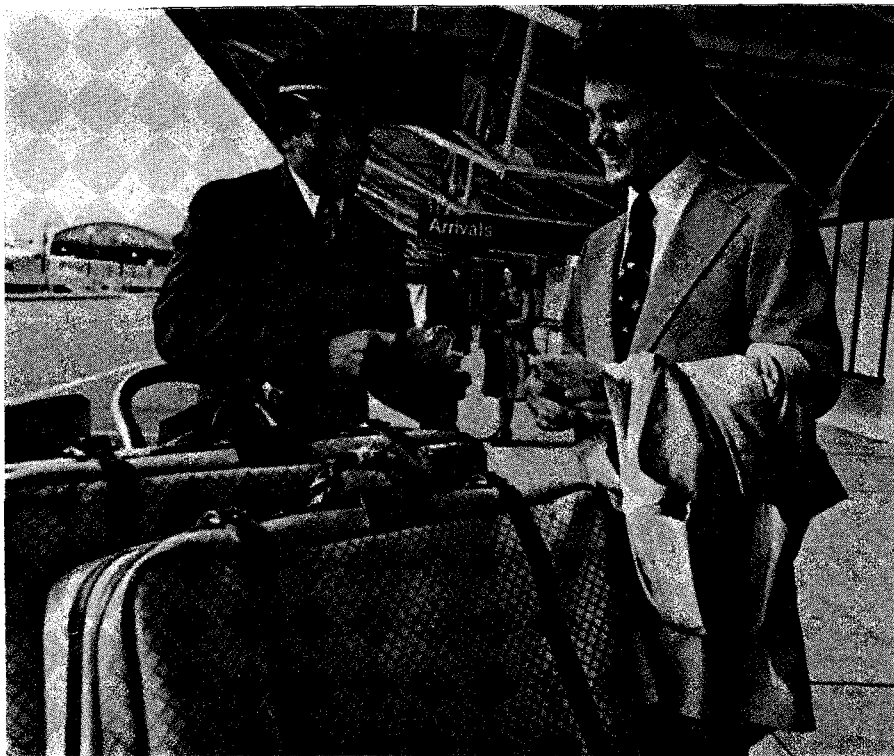
Nonie is in the dining room eavesdropping (I have caught sight of her): she has been waiting to see if Momma will decide against her; if Momma seems to be angry, Nonie will run to Aunt Beth. Aunt Beth is "not too bright" (Momma says) and is poorer than we are and is jealous of Momma and is dependent on her for her "social life": she is invited out as *Leila's sister*. She "makes trouble"—Daddy says she is Momma's "Achilles' heel" (Mom-

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ma says we all are: "He travels fastest who travels alone"). Aunt Beth makes trouble in general and gets into trouble herself, but mostly she makes trouble for Momma—repeats her confidences to "outsiders," encourages Nonie to be bad. . . .

Momma gets peevisish about that but not really angry: she considers Aunt Beth not a sensible woman but very dumb, a blind mole, a chuckler; and though she says, "Beth has done me more harm than anyone in my life, including S.L., and that's going some," she doesn't seem to be angry about it. When Momma gets tired and frightened, she turns to Aunt Beth, not for comfort but for jealousy—Aunt Beth's jealousy and hapless troublemaking: those things seem to warm Momma and persuade her how lucky she is, how much she's envied. When Momma becomes mad and bitter, then she might as well be misled by Aunt Beth for her own purposes as by someone else: at least, Aunt Beth reminds her of how Momma's father loved her best. Momma preferred trouble and jealousy to rootlessness. Also, there is something gaudy and cheap and careless in Momma, and Momma can let that out freely with Aunt Beth; and it hurts Aunt Beth, who has romantic notions about Momma: it hurts her, but she doesn't reproach Momma or yell at her to get hold of herself, as Daddy does; Aunt Beth is hurt, but she likes it when Momma is awful and in despair: Aunt Beth is a chuckler, blandly optimistic; she tsk-tsks over Momma, tries to get ahead of her, chuckles.

Sometimes Momma gets hold of herself just to spite Aunt Beth; and sometimes it is as if she is reminded *how* to get hold of herself, or edged toward it by great flocks of memories, by years of winning out over Aunt Beth.

When Nonie appears in the doorway to the dining room, when she shows herself and says, "Momma—" I know I'm losing, and I start to feel desperation gathering me in its arms, muffling me in hopelessness, in fear of losing at this time.

Nonie tells Momma Anne Marie and I destroyed her life again. She lies, as she said she would. She speaks in a phony hurt, accusing voice: she is rushed and self-righteous. I think, Surely Momma won't believe her *now*. But Momma absentmindedly makes encouraging noises at Nonie. Momma "likes" Nonie today: she is Nonie's mother, a friend.

She is not my friend just now. Sometimes what I am to Momma is a

fact of pleasure, usefulness, and duty, to which things of the world adhere. I am not even that just now.

I am something, someone uninteresting, left over from another chapter, a happier hour—Momma is interested in pain in men usually only when she has caused it. Otherwise, it's unreal to her. She mostly accuses me by reporting on how she feels: she says, "You're aggravating me. You're making me nervous."

I cry, "Nonie always lies!"

Momma says, "I don't want you talking about her like that—not about any woman—do you hear me?"

Momma says, "Your sister's not well and needs a little sympathy—"

Momma really means that menstruating interferes with how you should regard Nonie's character, but it doesn't occur to her to say that; or perhaps she sees it is a dangerous argument; and so, out of mischief—but righteousness—and in a good cause—of mercy and friendliness to Nonie—she says the other thing, which she knows is not true but which means she is going to be nice to Nonie and believe her although Nonie has lied stupidly.

Momma is proud of how "feminine" she is. She is as egoistic as Tolstoy but "feminine." She often gave in to other women's opinions. "I learn," she said. She never really repented anything. She despised people too much to regret what she had done; if then she became frightened that she had made a mistake, she would insist on being uncaring. Under no circumstances did she want her life commented on by repentance. She barely concealed this terrifying derring-do in herself, a carelessness in herself about whether she lived or died morally or physically in the course of this or that adventure of hers. She couldn't be bothered with fear. So she made thrilling mindless moments—as when she drove too fast on a high, long metal bridge and the tires of the car slipped. She did such things often and without much calculation.

It wasn't that death failed to frighten her: she came home from funerals sometimes silly and trivial with shock and like someone slapped and bruised and bloated, as if the funeral had slapped her around the mouth. Sometimes she came home from a funeral and she was *bored* and didn't care at all.

Either way, her fright never governed her—she was defiant, ungovernable. Her pride came from that.

Daddy said she was crazy—irre-

sponsible—and incapable of feeling: I think he meant she was incapable of sentiment, his sort of sentiment about peace in the house and about being calm and happy. *He* had problems of feeling; he could not feel much at a funeral (he could walk out whistling or humming under his breath some song such as "Life Is Just a Bowl of Cherries"). I think he was uneducated in feelings. I think his repertoire of emotions was limited: sexual satisfaction, a slow, rich bullying generosity that you had to appreciate or he became angry, and fear and defensive rage, and not too many more. He accused everyone around him of being unable to feel—because they did not make him happy.

Momma, in reply, used to say of herself, "I *know* I'm not perfect." That was a formula.

She used *not perfect* as absolution.

She would say, "Many women are better at bringing up children than I am, but I'm good at helping my children be realistic."

Momma would veer between tears-and-rage and self-forgiveness when she spoke of her own violence: she would use the self-exculpating of course: *Of course I hit him. . . . Of course I lost my temper.*

Sometimes Momma will intervene in a scene she is making with me and say, "Let's be reasonable," and she will start to be reasonable, start to listen to me; but if she listens too much she will have to change her life: past mistakes suddenly will rise and gibber at her; she thinks it's better to go on—and not lose her nerve. Not be reasonable. She thinks "in the long run" it's more reasonable to be unreasonable. Often when she says "Let's be reasonable" she means that I, the child, the boy, must be reasonable, she intends for *me* to be reasonable: she assumes she is as reasonable in her complicated life as it is possible to be and that I must do things in order to fit in with her: I must do it at once.

I constantly lost Leila; I'd look away, look back, and she wasn't there: she was somewhere in an adult mess of unhappiness and plottings.

One dreams first of a mother, then of any woman who is always *there*.

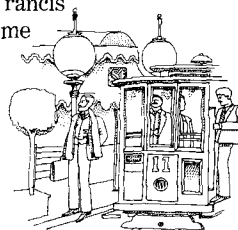
Momma doesn't want any of the consequences of what she says or does to be final.

I shout, "You're being terrible!" and I start to run out of the room; I want to get outside—the interior of the house is too charged with the

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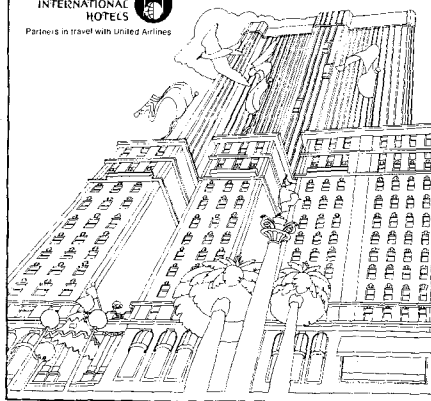
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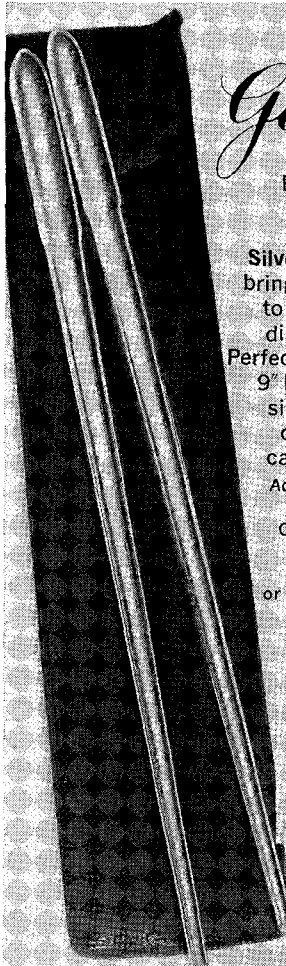
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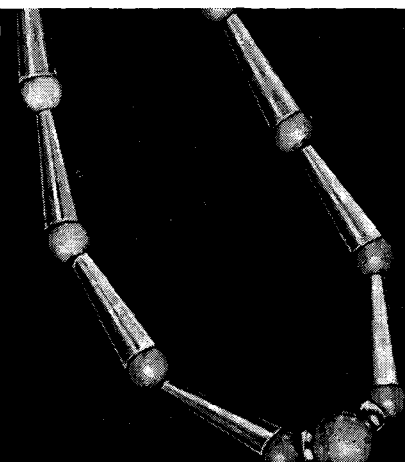


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feminine bestowal and withholding of justice, shelter, and safety.

But the women will not let me out of the room: they grab my shirt: they interpose their legs and hips; they keep me away from the door. This is when I am quite little. . . .

I then become hysterical, hysterically angry with her, obstinately accusing, and she tries to slap me. It is to comfort us both—it implies a common-sense world we can't get to otherwise, a world of physical reality common to us both. She slaps me out of respect for my childhood and her duties and with respect for my masculinity: I mean she does not hit me because I am powerless—I am not powerless—or because she is mean: she does it for efficiency: I have to understand all that. Perhaps there is, afterward, or during it, a small sting of pleasure she does not want to understand except as relief for my being a pest. She says, "Men are crazy, if you ask me—I understand only one thing about them, and I don't want to talk about that. . . ."

She really doesn't know what she is doing.

SHE said once, "I deserve respect—I don't have to earn it: I'm not a slave. . . ."

She keeps testing everyone to see what his quality is, especially the people near her, so she can judge the quality of her own life.

She says to me, "All right, young man, you've gone too far—you now you're going to get a spanking."

My chin starts to do strange, autonomous things; my eyes pursue their own childish life; and my mouth is filled with a sharp burning taste.

"YOU SHOULDN'T DO THIS!"

She said, "You're so conceited I can't stand it." She made a funny, truncated slapping gesture: she did not really mean to hit me—at least, she did not have a hunter's I-will-get-you focus. Rather, she sweeps into a somewhat vague, grand action—"I think a spanking is exactly what you need. . . ."

She tends to go into action decisively but absently: focus makes her lost to herself, would use her up; thought and reason would make her dilatory, careful. There is charm—and horror—in her absentness, in her decisiveness.

I back away from her; my mouth is quivering—with anger, reproach, contempt (moral). Momma is too slow and exalted for this sort of fighting. I get away from her quite easily: Momma half laughs—she stamps her

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foot—she is loosely, demandingly, vaguely festal; she is in a carnival temper. Momma is both weary and amused at dealing-with-the-child.

"My God, whoever saw such a boy? What makes you think you're allowed to show so much temper, my fine feathered friend? You'll kill someone someday—"

That is her way of arguing that she - is - training - me - for - civilization by what she is doing now.

The festal thing in her seems intimate, absurd, and *obscene*: it is very clear that everything that is happening has this particular style because I'm a boy. . . .

I back away from her. I mean I really do—in my mind, in my heart: back and back—walls, wings of shadow sweep to either side of me: I gape at her.

"Stop making those faces," she says to me. Her face is large; the at-home sagging, the I-don't-have-to-put-on-a-show-here is lightened and plumped out with a minor celebratory willfulness, an I-will-do-this. She *exhorts* me: "Be a good sport—take your punishment like a man—"

The child, a good ten or twelve feet away from her, at the rim of the largest area of silvery light in the room, bends at the waist, leans forward, yells spasmodically as if he were vomiting: "NO! NO! NO! NO!"

What is my life worth?

Nonie turns toward me—she is in motion—her face assumes, like a billboard announcing something or other, an expression of permitted malice.

Nonie says in an ecstasy of something-or-other, "You're going to get it now."

I can't believe this is happening. My senses start to function erratically. Shadows gather. Lights dim. Or so it seems.

My consciousness is as faceless as a wind—a typhoon: there is an emergency here: Nonie grabs me by the arm to hold me for Momma. . . . I am kicking her or at her. My legs are stronger than my arms, my shoes harder than my fists.

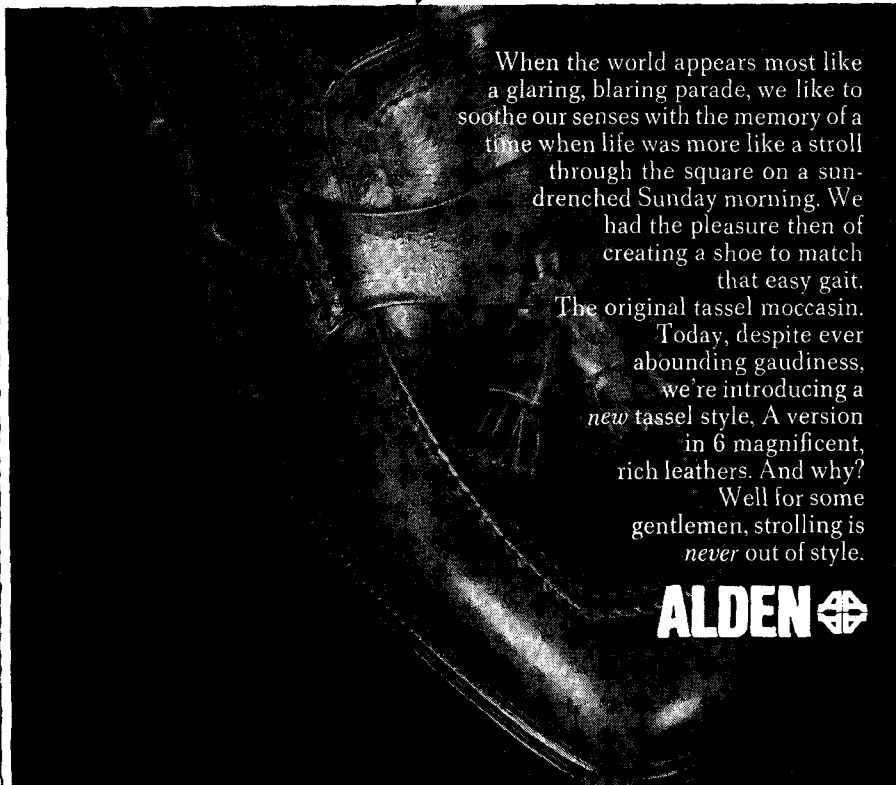
Nonie lets me go (no subsequent battle or physical adventure has the heroism of these childhood struggles with women: none of the same brilliance of being Captain Marvel).

Momma cries, "Nonie, keep hold of him!"

Momma nagged everyone.

I could dodge pretty well. I run—or scoot, scuttle toward the dining room sideways along a wall, facing Nonie, who grabs at, swipes at me: I make a

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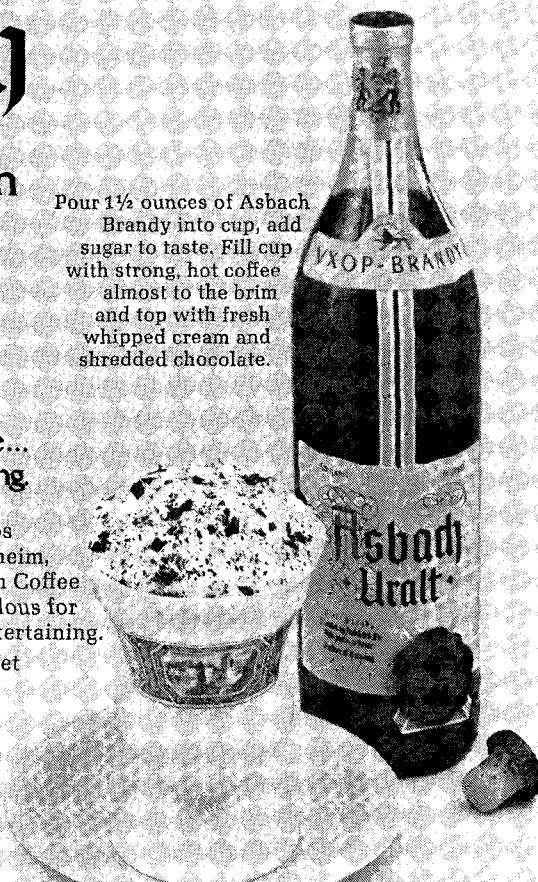
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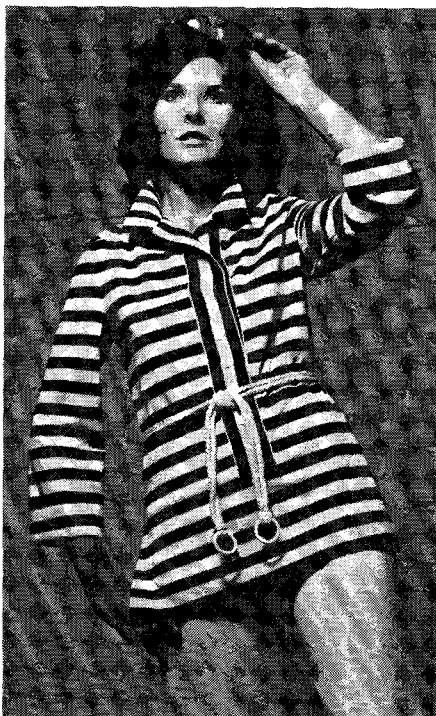
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noise and draw myself up on tiptoe so that my middle is small and Nonie's hand hits an end table. I turn and sprint, my back blazing with anxiety and expectation of being grabbed from behind.

I rolled under the couch.

"Come out from under there at once," Momma said. "That's cowardly—I don't like that."

There is an unspeakable pressure on me, on my ears, mind, and heart, to listen to her, to everything she says.

The child yelled: "YOU SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS, MOMMA!"

My mother replies, "Oh, you like to dish it out—but you can't take it—"

(She does not think I ought ever to get even with her.)

"I'm ashamed of the way you're acting," Momma said.

We are antagonists.

But she is my mother, and what she says also means that she is considering my welfare and that for me . . . to be enraged . . . to suffer . . . as I was doing . . . was *stupid*.

One hates and trembles at the stupidity of the world: but more so at one's own stupidity—the two things flicker into each other.

Momma kicks idly under the couch. Her foot appears in the shadows where I'm hiding—I pull off her shoe.

"Oh, he's impossible!" she exclaims.

One senses purposes in people—how can it be otherwise?

When I was handsome, these scenes were very different from those after I became ugly.

When I was ugly, the women quickly grew tired of fighting with me; I could extend the struggle, mulishly, and nearly destroy them that way: give them headaches. But when I was young and a pretty child, there was something unwearying in them, in these scenes, something flattering and terrible to me.

My mother said, "Come out from under that couch: I'm your mother and I'm telling you to stop this. Do what I say!"

I don't have to do what she says—she is not good. To frustrate her is not to harm Goodness itself.

This mood can change at any minute.

I shout, "YOU SHOULDN'T TRY TO HURT ME—YOU'RE NOT BEING GOOD TO ME!"

I was referring to the way I was a child in their care.

What they were doing had an appalling richness of emotional sophistication I did not share. I felt an aha-aha-aha—bitter: not ever to be un-

done: a sense of them-as-women. . . .

Some people speak of the infant's love for its mother: how clever they are to name that sleeping-and-waking, the dependencies and dreams, as *love*. I don't think there is any possible single name for the life-and-death mind-and-language thing of a woman with an infant.

The nature of almost any real moment makes almost all theory a sweet, maybe boyish farce far gone in willfulness.

The comfort and shock of using tremendous abstract terms as truth—when how can they be true? in what way can they be true?—permits us to explain a fleshly event without having to toy with the enormous emotions of actuality.

"YOU'RE ACTING CRAZY TO ME! YOU'RE BEING TERRIBLE TO ME!"

When I am older, I will defend myself differently. . . .

My mother says, "Stop—stop at once—stop that—I don't think this is funny!" Then: "What's wrong with you! Where is your sense of humor!"

Her remark makes me afraid I am a fool, and that this event is not serious and that I ought to laugh and give in.

But I am too deeply buried in the quarrel. There is something like the whipping of curtains back and forth, against my eyes, my temples—it is confusion. Perhaps this is some kind of domestic festival, one for impatient-but-joking women.

"WHY DO YOU LIE TO ME! WHY DO YOU LET NONIE LIE!" I shout at her. I think it is fair to have one's masculinity on terms—masculinity is not a free gift, as femininity is.

When I am young and these scenes occur, Momma says, "Why are you making this so difficult! Now I'm telling you for the last time: come here, come to me and get what's coming to you. . . ."

The hot tears gush. I may scream then—or I am silent, breathing hard, but thinking: Do I have to give in? Have I been defeated? Or I scream, as I said; I am convulsed with screaming—with flailing and kicking. Nonie may run up and grab my shirt and she can go *heh, heh*, like a villain, or Momma can pick me up—if I am quite little—and if I kick and wiggle she may drop me. Nonie may choke me—not seriously at first, but when she means it her fingers tighten like a noose: I start to black out, I say, "Momma!"

Sometimes Momma cannot bear the event, either, and will want to simplify it; and she will say in a tired, patient

voice—as if she had never been in a different mood, “Stop kicking—Nonie’s not hurting you.”

Momma cares for the happiness a man feels, as for a man’s pain, only if she has bestowed it on him; and then she regards the happiness very highly and wants to be repaid for it.

She says, “Stop that yelling. Do you want the neighbors to know you’re a mollycoddle? Don’t you know yet how to grin and bear things?”

If I then become silent and grave and resigned, she will say, “Don’t stand there and be so disapproving. It makes me sick. I hate holier-than-thou’s. You’re only getting what you deserve. Can’t you be big and admit that?”

And: “Don’t you dare judge me. Do you hear me?”

Momma’s breasts smell sweaty. Her shaven armpits have a mechanically sweet odor—of a deodorant or whatever. Her clothes make noises. Her pubic hair rustles against its covering. Her body squeaks, rubs, gives off heat: her shoes have wrinkles in them. I can, as a child, almost absorb the reality of her.

If she cannot punish me, she is indeed a slave.

She can’t just grab me and spank me. Sometimes she spans me as if to get material for an anecdote: “I spanked the child the other day.” (She thinks spankings are elegant—rich—high-class.) I have almost no reaction when she spans me like that: I have been hired for the occasion: I lie in her lap, limp and sullen and absent: she can’t tell if I am punished or not. She gives up in disgust: “I don’t know what’s wrong with you. I’m done. Get away from me.” She is disgusted that I don’t know how to be spanked, that I don’t know how to amuse her when I’m spanked by her.

Sometimes I stiffen and resist and make an issue of having been spanked, until Momma shouts, “I can’t stand it, I can’t stand it: he’s a monster!”

Sometimes she spans me so lightly that Nonie will cry out, “You’re not hurting him, Momma—”

Momma will say, “Then here—you do it—”

But if Nonie tries I will fight “like a madman” or “the madman from Borneo.” Nonie cannot spank me without looking brutal. She knows that.

She shifts from foot to foot: “You let him get away with everything!”

Momma does not want to be brow-beaten by Nonie: “Stop it—don’t be any more of a fool than you have to be.”

The two women try and try, but

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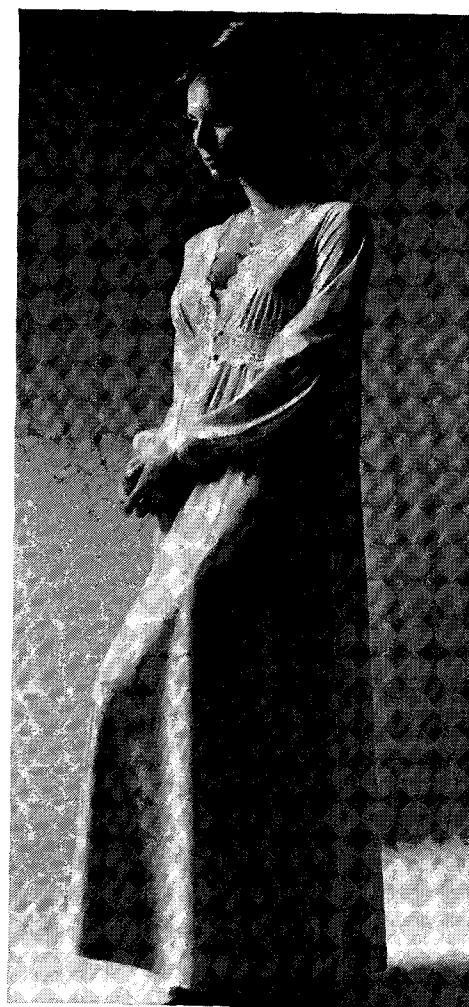
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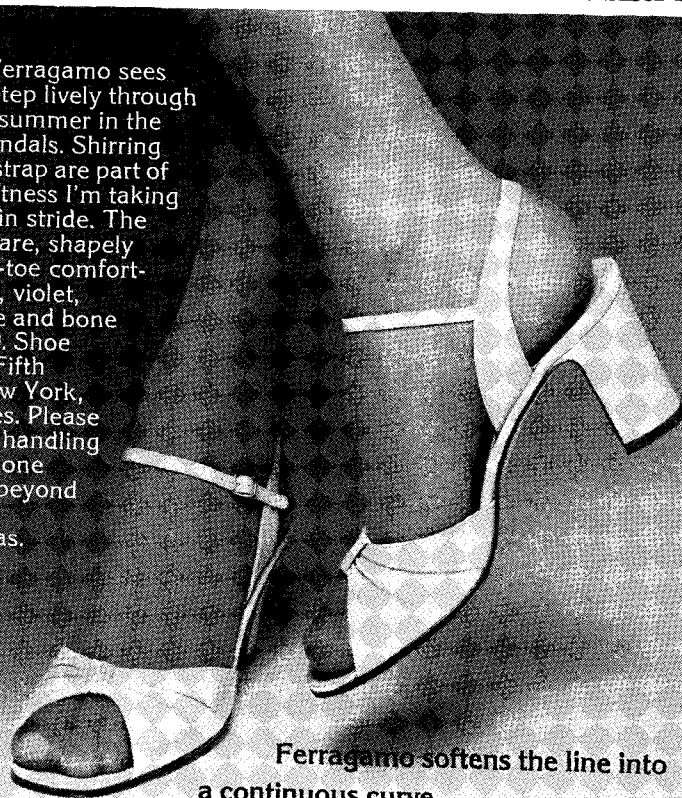
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neither can control the other, although they can hurt each other—they are like medieval champions who are evenly matched.

Momma says, "I am sick and tired of scenes! All right, Nonie, you run the house. You deal with your father—and the child. Let's see how far you get—"

She will say to Nonie, "You think I don't know what really went on here this afternoon? You think everyone's a fool but you?"

Momma is a pudgy, somewhat giddy and obscure, obstinate version of a policeman.

She may say to me, "Lie still—you have to learn your lesson." It is not clear what I am learning—it is never clear what a child is learning.

If I don't forgive Momma for what she does, the household enters on a period of difficulty—the difficulty is a joke if everyone is getting along with each other, but no one gets along with anyone long in our house, Momma with Daddy, Daddy with Nonie, Anne Marie with any of them, if I am in bad shape.

I am the child.

Momma can persuade Daddy for a while that I'm spoiled; he peers and suspects there is that in me, or worse. But then she is stuck with him, with Daddy: he will remember that he knows her; often he can't abide her; meanwhile, I am crushed, silent, listless, angry, sinking, half suffocated—ah, but uncomplaining. There is an unmasking: Daddy grows uneasy—where is his home, where are his chances for comfort, has Momma fooled him?

His heart constricts; he says, "It's ugly in here." Why is that child suffering? Why are we leading this life? Sooner or later, Momma has to placate me.

She will begin by offering me a tentative, self-conscious, phony smile of bravery, of oh-let's-not-be-petty, or some such thing.

I will turn away, my mouth harsh, my eyes showing contempt, pain, and dislike.

She is trying to get me too cheaply. She acts as if I required nothing. When I am upset, I am partly blinded: colors vanish; I fail to hear things. "Is he deaf—is he in a state again?"

She will say, "I don't know what I did—remember, I make mistakes, too. If you can't tell me what I've done, I don't think you should blame me, so be a nice boy and forgive me, what do you say?"

She used my comparative inability

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to describe things to indicate her comparative guiltlessness—and when I can describe what she did, she says, “Oh, I think that’s awfully petty, don’t you, to blame me for *that*?”

No.

She says, “I couldn’t have been so bad if that’s all you can think of to say—be reasonable now. . . .”

She will say, “It’s small of you to hold a grudge . . . to fight with a woman. You have a terrible temper. You have the temperament of an I don’t know what.”

She will say, “Listen, my fair-haired little friend, I assure you forgiveness is good for what ails you—you’ll ruin your good looks if you go on like this. . . .”

Or she will scream, when I am older and ugly, “I don’t want you in my house! You have no heart!”

She believed or hoped that any pain she suffered released her from any compulsion to carry out a duty.

When I am young, I keep track that she has not yet apologized to me for anything. She has not yet seen to it that there is any truth for me.

When I refuse to be fooled by her into too easy a reconciliation, she begins grudgingly or with amusement to admire me.

Or if she detects any plotting or firmness in me, dark, ill lit, obscure in expression, she will lighten, and she will make some offer: “Let’s be friends—I’ll stand by you, you’ll see.” And: “Don’t hold out for too much—believe me, I know whereof I speak—being stubborn is a losing proposition. Listen to me and learn: I’m the best friend you have. . . .”

When I was young, the house was often as much mine as it was my mother’s.

Then and later, I will always let my mother make peace with me. She will say, “Ah, you don’t intend to be a pain in the neck any longer—”

Sometimes I set her free—when I set her free, she usually *puts me on a shelf*: I become one of the things she doesn’t have to worry about at the moment; her attention flies on to other things.

When I don’t set her free . . . whenever I entered a room where she was, she would jerk with awareness, with memory: she would mention that I was angry; or she would suddenly glance at me with an entire consciousness that I was there: with calculations of how-to-handle-me.

I was cleverer with her than I was with anyone else.

The women uttered a lot of heav-

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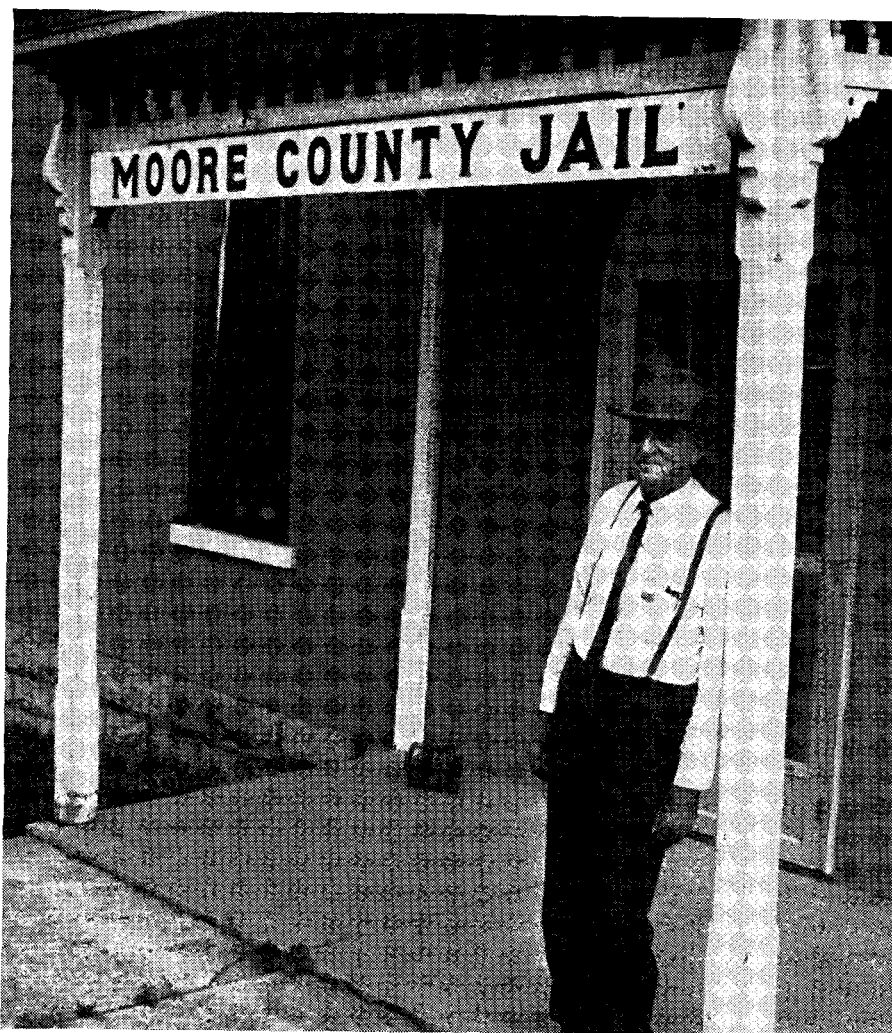
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ings, puffings, moans, exhortations to each other as I fought in various ways. I'd kick and shout, "You leave me alone!"

"We're not doing anything to you," Momma would say—disingenuously.

Sometimes, when I am older, I can drive them off, make them break off the fight by yelling that everyone knows how awful Nonie is or that some boy she liked had laughed at how big her behind was: I can threaten to repeat things outside the house; I can on occasion silence Momma by repeating Daddy's views about her.

Momma said, "You always have to win." And: "Why do you always have to win?" She said, "Why do you have to fight like this?"

I hide underneath something or other and confront her from there. . . . I run across the room and stand behind a chair and confront her from there.

She and I.

What is to become of us if I don't listen to her?

I don't know what I expected to gain.

There is always present the crushing idea that we-deserve-each-other—we deserve each other because we know each other, because this has gone on all my life. . . .

She will say, "Save your breath—I'm not listening to you."

Or: "I'm not listening to you—I never listen to people who are rude."

Some people think the amateurishness of family life is the most widely distributed human beauty.

"Are you willing to listen to reason? You have to give up now," my mother says. Perhaps I know only a small world, a false world. She will say, "Are you ready to show me some respect now?"

She says, "All right, let's get on with it." She means: that woman, that woman sitting there—that if I love her I have to help her hurt me now.

But I only have to help her hurt me if I love her. Otherwise, I can laugh and leave her sitting there forever, in memory, alone, ignored, unbeyed.

My mother.

More or less.

—HAROLD BRODKEY

MOST FASCINATING NEWS STORY OF THE WEEK

[The following item, reprinted in its entirety, is from the Clinton (Mass.) Community Shopper]

United States hit a peak of 4,131 in 1876 and hasn't been equalled since.



THE FASTIDIOUS GENTLEMAN FROM HARTFORD

FOR reasons not far to seek, the Phoenix Theatre has been bringing to the cozy Playhouse certain notable plays out of the American past. Remembering with delight its recent revivals of "27 Wagons Full of Cotton" and "A Memory of Two Mondays," I am all the more distressed to report that I find its latest offerings—William Gillette's "Secret Service" and Bella and Sam Spewack's "Boy Meets Girl"—occasions for disappointment. The plays themselves stand up fairly well, but the productions have been ill thought through, by people evidently at a loss to know how to deal with plays of their parents' and grandparents' (or perhaps even great-grandparents') time. In the case of "Secret Service," which was written in 1895, one either has confidence in it as a well-made melodrama of that sufficiently sophisticated era—the era of Ibsen, Shaw, Wilde, Fitch, and the like—or one doesn't; if one doesn't, then the most obvious and deplorable of temptations is to make fun of it.

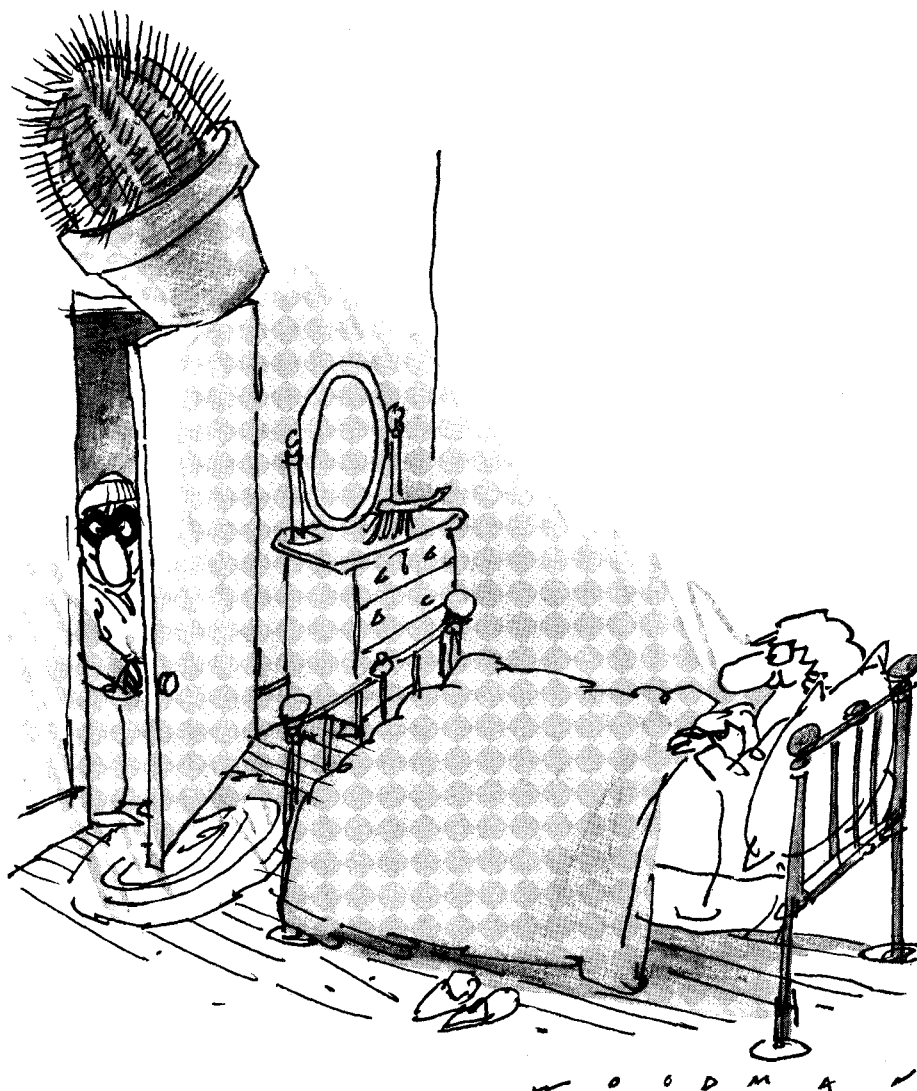
Daniel Freudenberger, the director of "Secret Service," has chosen this easy, craven way out. He has treated the play as if it had been written in the period that the action of the play is concerned with—that is, the period of the Civil War, when, so we are told (though I don't altogether believe it), audiences were expected to hiss the dastardly villain and shout encouragement to the hard-pressed hero. In reality, Gillette was writing about a time of which he had almost no firsthand knowledge—he was ten when the Civil War ended—and both his style of writing and his style of acting had little to do with what we think of as High Victorian. On the contrary, he was, in his ice-cold Hartford fashion, ardently *anti*-Victorian; audiences admired him precisely because he was so unshakably reserved, soft-spoken, and offhand—the epitome of a method of acting that was later embodied by Leslie Howard (and can still be studied in Howard's movies). The contrast between Gillette's gentlemanly detachment and the violence of the physical action of both his "Secret Service" and "Sherlock Holmes" was what gave his performances their exceptional distinc-

tion. *Pace* Mr. Freudenberger, Gillette was not James O'Neill, and "Secret Service" is not "The Count of Monte Cristo."

As the heroic Union spy, Captain Thorne (the role that Gillette himself played), John Lithgow certainly hams it up in an inappropriate fashion, but he doesn't make anything like the spectacle of himself that Charles Kimbrough does as the nefarious Benton Arrelsford; there is no vulgar guffaw from the audience that Mr. Kimbrough doesn't reach for, often with lamentable success. Meryl Streep is engaging in the role of the high-minded, love-smitten Edith Varney, and Marybeth Hurt is amusing as a flirtatious Confederate belle. Some quaint and touching Civil War songs are sung by the cast as interludes throughout the play; no

doubt Gillette would have considered them impudent interruptions of his handiwork, but they are by far the most pleasing attributes of the present production. The sets and lighting are by James Tilton, and the costumes are by Clifford Capone.

THE lack of confidence that Mr. Freudenberger appears to have felt in respect to "Secret Service" has infected Mr. Lithgow's direction of "Boy Meets Girl." The Spewack farce was first produced in 1935; it has to do with a Hollywood—unrivalled in prosperity, mindless in prankishness—that is now one with Nineveh and Tyre, and the young folk of the Phoenix company have neither the knowledge nor the training to portray convincingly that vanished place and time. Still, the plot of the farce is sturdy enough to withstand almost any degree of failure except the failure to charm—rarely have I seen a play in which that faculty was so conspicuous by its absence. Only Marybeth Hurt, as a simple, pregnant girl named Susie, wins our hearts, by playing her role as if she were Mary Pickford. The chief char-




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acters in "Boy Meets Girl" are a pair of gifted, irresponsible screenwriters named Law and Benson; one supposes that they were modelled on Charlie MacArthur and Ben Hecht, whose practical jokes and arbitrary ways grow less amusing as they recede into history. Law and Benson are played by Lenny Baker and Mr. Kimbrough; they breathe hard and jump up and down on the furniture but are the least convincing of madcaps.

Mr. Tilton's Art Deco set is very fetching, as are Mr. Capone's costumes; they convey what the cast cannot. "Boy Meets Girl" deserves another try, on its merits and not simply because we are celebrating the inescapable B-----l.

"MONTY PYTHON LIVE!," at the City Center, is an overlavish sampling of the antics of the well-known British TV comedy group. For reasons that I haven't fathomed and don't intend to fathom, the group strikes me as much funnier on the tube than it does in real life, if the huge stage and bleak auditorium of the City Center can be said to be real life. The group is here for a couple of weeks; it has a following, which tends to be teen-aged and to shriek instead of laugh, so don't be alarmed by any strange sounds that you may hear emanating from West Fifty-fifth Street.

—BRENDAN GILL

THE MESSAGE

Day, day, dark day,
lowering over the roofs,
no rain in your downward hands
and face,
what message do you have for me?

The bible of fear is thumbed
to a ragged edge—all miseries
foreknown, all losses
counted up.

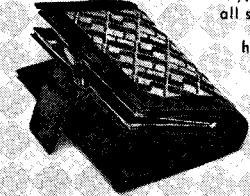
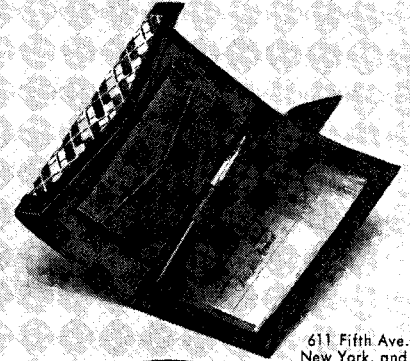
And yes, in the mind's reach, I know
there are suns—bronze trumpets
to open the flowers' eyes.

Would you tell me of silence speaking
into foolish ears?
Of the imprisoned heart of pearls?

Or beyond all joys
and thunderings
would you intimate
how to live in the frugal shining
of this gray light?

—PAUL PETRIE

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(16) NEVER SAY MR. P—— IS IN THE OFFICE—UNLESS AND UNTIL YOU ARE ADVISED.

(17) When you leave at night all lights in the reception area must be turned off except for spot lights over the desk and the desk should be cleared and typewriters covered.

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MUSICAL EVENTS

Two Donnas and a Devil

NINETEENTH-CENTURY critics wrote often about prima donnas' eyes. Modern critics have little chance to do so, for nowadays eyes are seldom visible on the operatic stage. The Prologue of Donizetti's "Lucrezia Borgia" reaches its climax on a unison cry of "È la Borgia!" doubled by menacing brass octaves, as a mask is torn from the heroine's face; when Giulia Grisi sang the role, there were disclosed, according to Théophile Gautier, "features pale as if cut in marble, and defiant, flashing eyes." Beverly Sills has been singing the role at the State Theatre, and none could tell whether at that moment her eyes flashed defiance or not; they remained in pools of dark shadow beneath a ledge of long, heavy lashes. In common with the Bolshoi Opera, both the City Opera and the Metropolitan favor a form of basic lighting which strikes visitors from abroad as strangely primitive; it consists of pointing white spotlights at the soloists. Hans Sondheim's lighting plot for "Lucrezia Borgia" touched bottom in the second scene of Act I, when his spotlights scurried around

after the three singers, spilling circles of light and hard shadows on the furniture and the walls of the ducal apartment. Electric light has had an important part to play in opera. Eduard Hanslick declared that "Wagner could as little have composed 'The Ring' before the invention of electric light as without the harp and the bass tuba." Queen Victoria heard "Lohengrin" for the first time on her eightieth birthday (a command performance at Windsor with a very grand cast: Nordica, Schumann-Heink, Jean and Édouard de Reszke, David Bispham), and noted that "Jean looked so handsome in his white attire, armour, and helmet, and the electric light was turned strong upon him, so that he seemed surrounded by a halo." The production book for Verdi's "Don Carlos" specifies that when Charles V appears at the end, splendid in mantle and imperial crown, "his figure is illumined by a ray of electric light." We take such effects for granted now. It would be a pity if New York audiences took it for granted that opera singers are regularly lit only by hard white beams

angled to hit their foreheads, noses, and chins.

That Miss Sills, like Cressida, has language in her eye I know, for I met her once, soon after I had written a distinctly unenthusiastic account of her London début. Although this language was denied her by the City Opera staging of "Lucrezia Borgia," in other ways she was eloquent. "Lucrezia" is a strong opera, worth exhumation. The libretto, by Felice Romani, reads well. The play that is its source, Victor Hugo's "Lucrèce Borgia," forms, in the words of Hugo's preface, a "bilogy" with "Le Roi S'Amuse" (the source of "Rigoletto"): the one deals with "moral deformity purified by maternal emotion," the other with "physical deformity sanctified by paternal emotion." There is no conventional love interest; the opera's two duets of affection are between mother and son and between that son, Gennaro, and his friend Orsini, a breeches role for a contralto. The score, like that of Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera," consists of one good number after another; the listener is carried forward on a powerful tide of melodic and dramatic invention. The predominance of lower voices—the tenor, Gennaro, has five companions who function as a semichorus—gives richness and warmth to the texture, and the title role stands out in high relief. It was composed, in 1833, for a prima donna, Henriette Méric-Lalande, at the end of her career, and so devised that great effects could be achieved without prodigies of weighty vocalism. For all the forcefulness of personality revealed in Lucrezia's music, the role does not need the sheer vocal force that an Elizabeth in Donizetti's "Roberto Devereux," a Fausta, or a Gemma di Vergy (three parts written for Ronzi de Begnis) must command. Of Lucrezia, so tender, so passionate, so wicked and proud, Miss Sills gave an inspired performance, bringing each episode to life with her delivery of the words, her rhythmic control of accent, and her use of the coloratura for dramatic expression. One tiresome trick—flying up to strident, unwritten high notes at the end of numbers—I wish she would drop. Her *acuti* are no longer reliable; instead of adding a final touch of excitement, they merely diverted attention from Lucrezia onto an imperfect singer. In any case, the interpolated high notes are unnecessary, and often inartistic. Donizetti wrote the role up to B flat, with some passing C's in a final cabaletta that was included only at Méric-Lalande's insistence.

In admiration and advocacy of



*"Mama Benson, Papa Benson,
and all the little Bensons, good morning."*

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Donizetti's serious operas I sway to and fro, overinfluenced by impressions the latest performance has left. Sometimes it makes me quite cross that a company should have been playing "Lucia," "Anna Bolena," "Maria Stuarda," "Roberto Devereux," and now "Lucrezia Borgia" during years when there has been no Rameau, no Handel, no Gluck, no Haydn, and no "Rake's Progress" in its repertory. (But then there has been Monteverdi, Cherubini, Janáček, Delius, and Henze; no one can say that City Opera fare is unadventurous.) And sometimes I come away, as from this "Lucrezia Borgia," eagerly scanning the billboard to discover when the next performance is due. Winton

Dean's paper on "Donizetti's Serious Operas," published in the latest *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, lists three good reasons for looking closely at these works, considered "until recently... not respectable enough for musicology": they can be extremely moving in the theatre; their composer was "from the first a conscious innovator, eager to expand the range of operatic form;" and he "exercised a more decisive and fruitful influence on Verdi than is commonly recognized." The specifically Verdian things in "Lucrezia" are the finale of the Prologue, echoed in the Act II tenor-baritone duet of Verdi's "Battaglia di Legnano," and, in the first scene of Act I, a duettino for two rogues—in nefarious dialogue over an orchestral melody—which closely anticipates Rigoletto's encounter with Sparafucile. The formal enterprise shows itself in the setting within a duet of the tenor's only air; in a trio whose final section becomes a duet; generally in the treatment of the semichorus; and most of all in the *finale nuovo* that Donizetti added for an 1840 revival when his Gennaro was Napoleone Moriani, celebrated as the "tenore della bella morte." The composer scrapped Méric-Lalande's cabaletta (which opens well but then becomes trumpery) and wrote instead a "beautiful death" for Moriani, unconventional in form, punctuated by Lucrezia's sad cries of "Figlio mio!" (At the City Opera, we hear *both* pieces—first the death and then the cabaletta.) The affective power of the opera is fully revealed by Miss Sills and by Julius Rudel, who conducts with feeling for and complete control of its colors and its dramatic pacing.

Gennaro, at the performance I attended, was Gaetano Scano; he was

clean and true, and sustained his part well. (Neither of the additional tenor arias—Donizetti wrote one for the Gennaro of Mario, and another for that of Ivanov—was included; they are unwanted unless a second Mario or Ivanov is at hand.) Hilda Harris was a sparkling Orsini. Richard Fredricks, as Duke Alfonso, lacked the large, majestic line implied by Donizetti's basso-cantante writing, but he sang with vigor, and should have been allowed the second verse of his cabaletta. The first and the last of Henry Bar-

don's scenes are striking: the Venice nocturne of the Prologue he bathes in a rich, dusky red; the transformation of a merry banqueting hall into a death chamber is dramatically achieved. But the proportions of his Ferrara piazza seem awry; the buildings are too small. (The production is borrowed from Dallas; perhaps this décor sat more easily on the Dallas stage.) Details in Tito Capobianco's staging suggest that someone has not been attentive to the text (Gennaro declares that he keeps ever next to his heart a letter from his unknown mother—while drawing it from his cuff), but on the whole it moves surely and strongly. The device of bringing the singers out into the house itself—over bridges that span each flank of the orchestra pit—and in front of the main auditorium wall lent acoustic immediacy to several numbers. "Lucrezia" returns in the fall season, and I look forward to enjoying it again.

FOR the last weeks of its spring season, the City Opera planned a small flurry of contemporary works—Josef Tal's "Ashmedai" and Douglas Moore's "Ballad of Baby Doe" for three performances each, and Jack Beeson's "Lizzie Borden" for two. "Baby Doe" and "Lizzie Borden" are still to come as I write; "Ashmedai" has been and gone, leaving little impression save of a brilliantly accomplished performance by the company. The piece was one of Rolf Liebermann's many commissions for the Hamburg City Opera and was first performed there in 1971. The libretto, by Israel Eliraz, is a political parable. In Talmudic lore, Ashmedai—Asmodeus, a major devil—took on King Solomon's features, usurped his throne, and was accepted by his people as their ruler. In the opera, the peaceable king of an unspecified country has a lovable but fallacious belief in his subjects' essential goodness; willingly—and in order to enjoy a respite free of regal

cares, of his termagant wife, and of his ambitious, bellicose son—for a year he renounces his throne to Ashmedai, convinced that no great harm can result. Great harm results. The curtain falls on a people gone to the devil, spiritually and materially ruined. The old king is killed; his illegitimate daughter, a dreamy girl out of touch with reality, keens for the vanished sunlit world in which she was born.

It's a big theme—the transformation of an easygoing, romantic folk, enjoying their music and poetry and gardens, into murdering brutes following their Führer. A few years earlier, in another Hamburg opera, "Arden Muss Sterben," Alexander Goehr had reminded the newly prosperous German burghers that "*Wir waren immer dagegen*" is easily said and that the guilt remains. (He and his librettist, Erich Fried, were booed for their pains.) The year before that, the chorus in Henze's Salzburg opera "The Basarids" had sung in a "We were always against it" vein when the madness of mass possession had cooled. None of these operas is a cut-and-dried allegory of the Third Reich. ("Do not forget," Shaw wrote in "The Perfect Wagnerite," "that an allegory is never quite consistent except when it is written by someone without dramatic faculty.") They have that varied applicability to the thought and experience of audiences which distinguishes drama from didactic spectacle. Eliraz's libretto, which is possibly as much about Israel as about Germany, and not irrelevant to recent American history, contains a warning ("All a poet can do is to warn": Britten set those words of Wilfred Owen as epigraph to his "War Requiem")—against any easy belief that innate human decency is incorruptible. It's a warning that is needed today. But—with regret I record it—between conception and execution "Ashmedai" seemed to have lost its power. It came across as a cleverly crafted diversion, mildly amusing, mildly touching, and mildly distasteful as, for our entertainment, it flickered lightly over very serious questions. Tal's music is no more than a thoroughly professional job of libretto-setting: the words are clear (the piece was done in an English translation by Alan Marbé), the pace is skillfully controlled. But nothing happens. The music goes in one ear and out the other. Harold Prince's direction was deft, slick. It functioned flawlessly, and left both mind and heart unmoved. Ken Billington's lighting was highly accomplished. So was the large cast, led by



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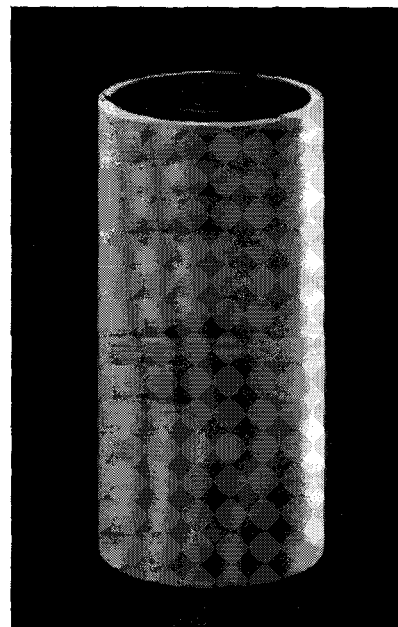
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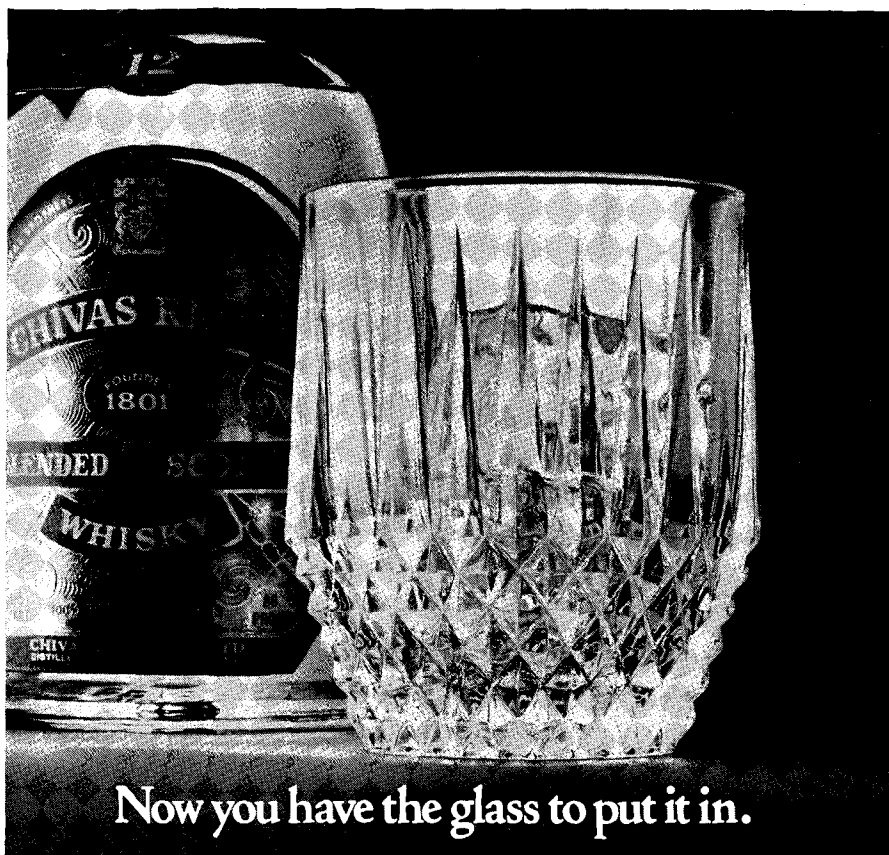
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John Lankston in the title role, Paul Ukena as the King, Eileen Schauler as the Queen, and Richard Taylor as the Prince. Everyone danced, sang, acted with effortless assurance and address. Gary Bertini, who was in charge of the Hamburg première, was a masterly conductor.

THOMAS PASATIERI's "Ines de Castro," commissioned for the Baltimore Opera Company and performed by it this month, is a "culinary" opera of no interest, cooked up from stale ingredients, weak in its musical and dramatic ideas. The subject, one of the great love stories, could have life in it still, even after so many stage treatments. (The most celebrated is Giuseppe Persiani's opera of 1835, with a libretto by Salvatore Cammarano.) Bernard Stambler's libretto is partly in prose, partly in insipid verse.

Love is a soaring joy
 That leaps high over the hills.
 Love brings such delight,
 My heart holds nothing more.
 Let my lady treasure me,
 And let the world go by

is a fair specimen, from the first duet of Ines and Dom Pedro. The dramaturgy is neat enough, in a schematic, unimaginative way. Pasatieri's short-breathed music goes through Giordano-like or Cilea-like gestures, without ever capturing the note of full-throated emotion that can bring Giordano's or Cilea's operas to life. Baltimore did the piece proud, having assembled a notable cast: Evelyn Mandac and Richard Stilwell as the lovers, and Lili Chookasian, Sheila Nadler, Lou Ann Lee, William Neill, James Atherton, and James Morris in other roles. Christopher Keene conducted. Tito Capobianco directed. An appreciative audience applauded Mario Vanarelli's set for the Coimbra garden thrice over: each time the curtain rose on it. Robert Brand's expert lighting—without follow spots—both revealed expression and enhanced Mr. Vanarelli's décor. (As Hanslick once said, "the painter of the scenery can account for only a half of the total effect; the other half rests with the lighting, which corresponds to the instrumentation of a musical idea.") But Baltimore's Lyric Theatre—not so much an opera house as a concert hall, apparently modelled on the Leipzig Gewandhaus, with a stage added to one end of it—proved too big a place to be set ringing by these voices. In Berlioz's phrase, one heard but one did not vibrate. —ANDREW PORTER

THE CURRENT CINEMA

Genius, Genia, Genium, Ho Hum

FILMS, especially dreadful ones, are dead keen on geniuses, or geniae, though geniae, apart from Mme. Curie, come in for little attention unless they have had a love life that allows for the casting of big male stars. There was a Herbert Wilcox movie about Nurse Cavell, with Anna Neagle (singing "Abide with Me"), who was earlier said to have looked thoroughly well brought up as Queen Victoria, and who certainly looked just as well brought up as Nurse Cavell. I can imagine a film in the geniae tradition about George Sand (though not about George Eliot, until women's liberation insists that G. H. Lewes was perfectly happy playing second fiddle, and certainly not one about Jane Austen). The greatest genius of all,

you might say, was Jesus, and many a rotten film has been made about him. One of the more rotten was Nicholas Ray's "King of Kings," which was so like a musical that when someone in the multitude said piously "Give us a sign," I misheard him and thought Christ was being asked "Give us a song." And there was John Huston's "Moulin Rouge," about Toulouse-Lautrec, in which someone identified the very carefully crawling Jose Ferrer—the poor man being saddled with playing a genius on his knees—by saying cheerfully at the door, "So long, Toulouse." And, as one remembers it, a Rembrandt film in which the artist softened the heart of a beggar posing for him by telling him the story of Saul and David. And "The Agony and the Ecstasy," about Michelangelo, when Michelangelo was taking a snooze in the Sistine Chapel and his outraged countess, with the full flurry of a woman in love, said tartly, "Michelangelo, are you or are you not going to finish that ceiling?"

But what is it about music which leads popular filmmakers to produce such drivel about composers? Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Berlioz, Chopin, Schumann, Liszt, Wagner, Johann Strauss II, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Rimski-Korsakov, Victor Herbert, Sigmund Romberg, George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter: it has always been the same. There was an Austrian film about Beethoven in which Schubert's stepmother came to him and said distractedly, "Ludwig,

I'm very worried about Franz. He can't finish his symphony." "What?" said the growingly deaf Beethoven, hand to ear. Ah, Beethoven. The number of times the opening of the Fifth Symphony has been used as a sort of fee-fi-fo-fum tune. In the same film, the poverty-stricken Ludwig faintly hears his annoyed landlord knocking at the door for overdue rent; Beethoven immediately runs to the keyboard and dashes out the fee-fi-fo-fum theme. And then he is sitting in the woods scribbling the Pastoral Symphony while the rain spatters down and a work of genius is badly smudged. Luckily for us, Ludwig had a good aural memory.

The prime philistinism of films about musicians is in using their day-to-day lives as their creative imaginations; film people seem to ignore the fact that Mozart had a career of constant struggle with poverty, ignoble patrons, and ill health, and yet produced some of the most blithe and prodigal music the world has ever heard. The reason for this kind of philistinism may be that, of all the arts, music is the most arcane to the literal-minded. Writing, after all, deals in words; painting and sculpture are both remotely available to the roughshod comprehension of film directors, writers, and front-office men; but the sources of music are mysterious. If the results are something you can hum, O.K. If they resist hummability, you can't even tar and feather them. You can only yell, as at "The Rite of Spring."

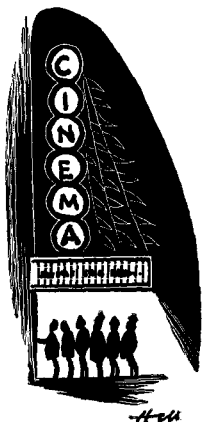
So we approach, cautiously, Ken Russell, who in his early days at the BBC made first-rate, modest, simple documentaries about Delius, Elgar, and Richard Strauss. His use of long-shots helped. Now his films are tenth-rate, overblown pornographic fantasies that treat art as if it were a diagrammatically drawn manual on lovemaking for the bored. In these days, Russell bangs our noses against the conventional cinematic notion of genius as if it were a manic affliction that landed on someone because his wife was being ill-tempered and his mistress humbly believed in him. Russell has given us big-scale biographies of Tchaikovsky and Liszt, and now he fells us with his "Mahler."

Considering the luridness of Russell's present "documentary" style,

Mahler is played very well by Robert Powell: black-coated, monomaniacal, intensely egocentric. Travelling in a railway carriage, Mahler-Powell is forced by the script—Russell's own—to give us freewheeling associations about his life. Bullied as a child, preferring composition to piano lessons, he later married Alma and brutally made her copy out his scores, thereby frustrating her own efforts at composition. We see his daughter's death, and his opportunistic conversion from Judaism to Catholicism, so as to be acceptable for a key job in Vienna. Alma is played very well by Georgina Hale, though the power-behind-the-throne ambition that matched her husband's musical ambition—besides Mahler, she also married or lived with Kokoschka, Gropius, and Werfel—seems to go oddly with Georgina Hale's innocent round face.

When Alma complains in the film that Mahler neglects her, he answers, with a false guilelessness for which she should have hit him, "But my music is my love for you." But then Alma is Russell's true heroine, a girl who would have been happily nourished on breakfast with a genius. The film is typically literal, suggesting that a musician's life provides the outline for his work. Before his daughter's death, he is shown writing the "Kindertotenlieder." What else? Accused of foresight, he says combatively, "I don't choose what I compose, I compose what chooses me." (Hmm. Russell's Mahler is much given to word play, always about himself. "I conduct to live. I live to compose." This does not quite correspond to Bruno Walter's appraisal of Mahler's achievements as an interpreter of other people's music, including his work on Mozart's "Figaro," in which he seems to have had a powerful understanding of the partnership between the score and da Ponte's libretto.) Later on in the film, Mahler is told by a regal-looking black woman on the train, "Your latest symphony, the Ninth, it's all about death. Death the joker, death the lover." Mahler looks scared, as well he may, being sure that he is a fellow-genius with Bruckner and Beethoven: both his confreres, and both dead after their ninth symphonies. The ninth! Death!

Mahler's character doesn't seem to have been particularly melodramatic, but Russell's film asserts that it was. The movie even shows the composer, having had a heart attack, in a scene in which he imagines himself alive in a glass-topped coffin while his wife prances on top of it, flirting with a



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Nazi Storm Trooper. The mind of the picture is dulled and Nietzschean. There is a long scene equating Wagner and Nazism through Cosima Wagner, and including a characteristically banal sequence in which Mahler abjures Judaism by eating pig's-head and drinking milk at the same time. He seems to regret his forsaken Judaism, but there is no historical documentation for this that I can find; rather, the reverse. Gabriel Engel, in his meticulously documented monograph, says that Mahler "never complained of religious discrimination," and adds this note: "Alfred Roller relates that in those last sad days preceding Mahler's resignation from the Viennese Opera House, he said bitterly, 'Is it not strange that the anti-semitic papers are the only ones that still seem to have some respect left for me?'" Some people may hold that Russell's devil-may-care technique has enough talent to override quibbles about the truth of historical facts. But there is no higher respect in biographical art—or, indeed, in investigative reporting such as we have recently read and seen enacted in "All the President's Men"—than respect for facts.

As Russell's film has it, Mahler's guilt about his cast-aside Judaism is extravagant. The film includes a lunatic-asylum scene about a figure who imagines himself to be the Emperor Franz Josef reading aloud to Mahler from a book, like Hamlet to Polonius, with suggestions about a Gentile skin graft to be performed on Mahler; but it can't be managed, because the dotty one's hands seem to be in a straitjacket. Of all nightmares of guilt, this is the least vivid I recollect. Mahler-Powell is persistently photographed so as to suggest that he is not a musician but a mesmerist. Along with the film's staring closeups of his Great Beyond eyes is a metaphysical smirk, substituting for artistic force. Though there is much that is portentous in the film, there is absolutely nothing that is serious; and though there is much that is revved-up in the film, there is no insight into the tensivity of Mahler's music, which perhaps owes less to Wagner than the sumptuousness of Russell's picture suggests.

So all we can know in our sane moments—of which the lack in Ken Russell is enough to drive one up the wall—is what we knew before: that musical composition is entirely undramatic, not subject to glib psychoanalysis, both quite intolerable and uniquely rewarding, and, above all, extremely hard work, like a self-employed plumber's. Depictions of artists as dream-

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driven madmen do little service to the appreciation of Mahler's music; Leonard Bernstein's concerts have done a thousand times as much. All through this film, we have the feeling that we are not in Mahler's fantasies but in Russell's.

"THE SAILOR WHO FELL FROM GRACE WITH THE SEA." Difficult prepositions. Given the sado-erotic content of the film, which is directed by Lewis J. Carlinio from the late Yukio Mishima's book, one tends to make Grace a woman: "The Sailor Who Fell Into Grace Through the Sea." The woman is actually a beautiful young widow, played by Sarah Miles. She is cursed with an angelic-faced son who is a member of a club of chilling schoolboys. They cut up a doped cat alive for analytic purposes, and then calmly murder the sailor (Kris Kristofferson) whom the boy's mother means to marry, because they feel that his decision to become a landlubber husband has broken his sacred compact with the sea. This very Japanese and fetid idea of an occult pact with the non-human has been transferred to, of all places, Dartmouth, in Devon, with its English teashops and benignly mannerly colonels. Try transplanting "Moby Dick" to the Lake District, or "Oliver Twist" to Scarsdale.

—PENELOPE GILLIATT

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Medical Director
SUBJECT: General Medical Examination (Manual Section 710.13)

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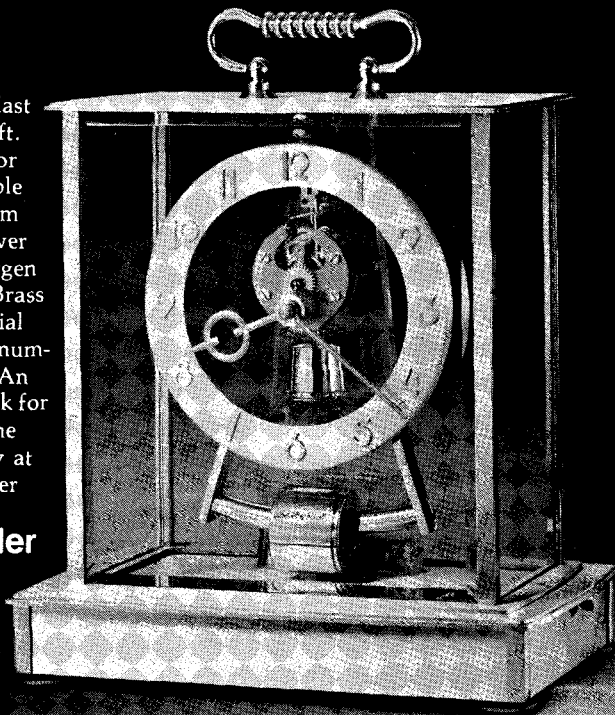
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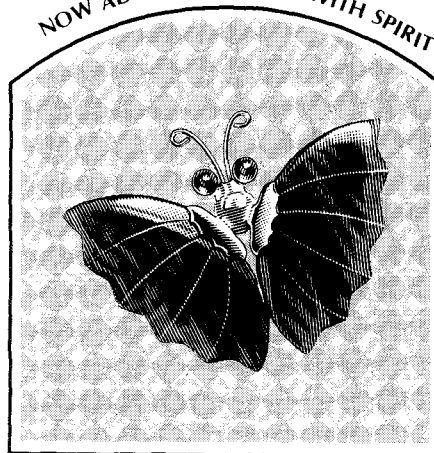
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U.S. JOURNAL: COSTILLA COUNTY, COLORADO

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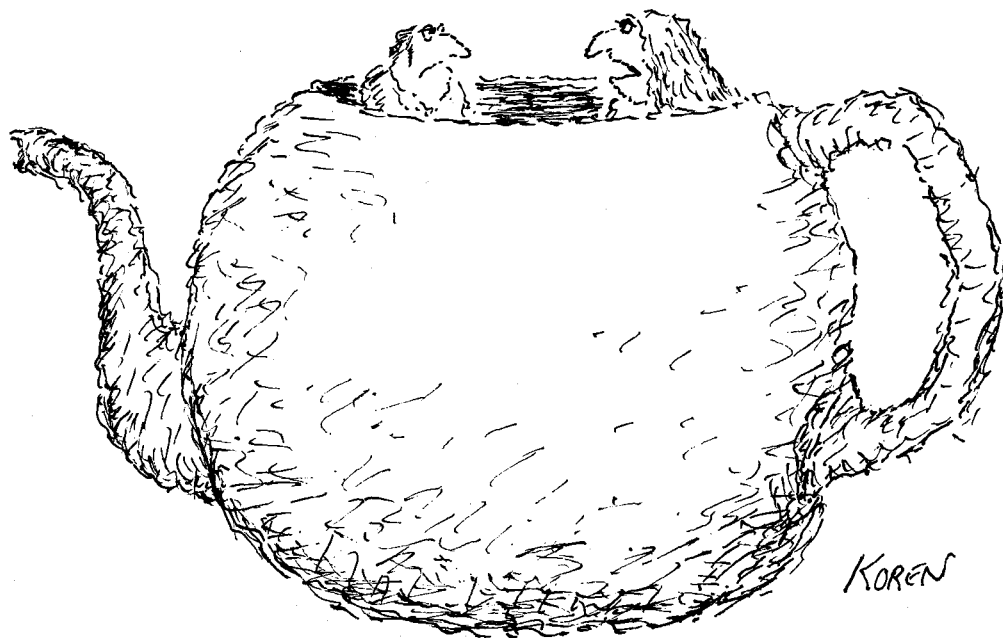
JUST about everyone who lives in Costilla County was born there. Just about everyone seems to know precisely when his forefathers arrived—in the eighteen-fifties, as *pobladores*, or settlers, recruited by Don Carlos Beaubien of Taos to colonize the million-acre Sangre de Cristo land grant he had acquired from the government of Mexico. In the high country that is now Taos County and Rio Arriba County, in northern New Mexico, people like those Beaubien recruited had been farming the same land since Spain sent expeditions toward the interior of the continent, long before there was a United States. Far into this century, their remote settlements seemed more like the rural villages of Spain or Peru than like part of an American state. Their spoken Spanish retained some echoes of the eighteenth century, and their religion was strongly influenced by a Penitente movement best known for the reluctance of some of its members to give up rituals of scourging. The people who agreed to move north to the San Luis Valley as settlers of the Sangre de Cristo grant became separated from the rest of Spanish New Mexico by the Colorado state line, but Costilla County has nothing in common with the popular image of Colorado except mountains. The Sangre de Cristo Mountains coming north from New Mexico tower over the valley on the east, even though the valley itself is a mile and a half above sea level. The San Juan Mountains and the Sawatch Range stand be-

tween the valley and the rest of Colorado. In a way, Costilla County has remained more isolated than some similar places in northern New Mexico, where the Indian pueblos and the scenery and the conquistadores legends drew successive waves of outsiders—artists and wellborn eccentrics and tourists and, eventually, the nineteen-sixties flower children, accompanied by a good number of nineteen-sixties flower grownups. The county seat of Costilla County, San Luis, is a town of eight hundred people. Many descendants of the *pobladores* still live in villages that seem dominated by cracked adobe or on tiny *ranchitos* with a garden patch and a few head of cattle. Like a lot of rural people who live together in remote places for generations, the people of Costilla County have the reputation of being proud and independent and close-knit and suspicious of strangers. Like a lot of rural people who still hunt game for their own tables, they are not awed by firearms.

In 1960, a stranger came to the San Luis Valley to buy what everyone had always called the Mountain Tract—a seventy-seven-thousand-acre tract of land on the western slope of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains which happened to be the last significant parcel of Beaubien's grant remaining unfenced. The seller, the Costilla Land Company, consisted of some Denver businessmen who had held the land for years without much discernible purpose beyond the intention of someday reselling it. The buyer was John T. Taylor, a timber

and land man from New Bern, North Carolina. As Taylor later recalled the transaction, the sellers, willing to part with the land for what seemed a bargain price of five hundred thousand dollars, did include a mild warning that he might face some poaching and some claims by local residents—what people in the business call “a little cloud on the title.” The cloud turned out to be the virtually universal belief in Costilla County that the descendants of the Sangre de Cristo grant settlers had the legal and moral right to pasture cattle and gather wood and cut timber and hunt game on the Mountain Tract, no matter who owned it. When Taylor arrived in Costilla County as the owner of the property, a committee to fight for those claims already existed. It was called the Asociación de Derechos Cívicos—the Association for Civic Rights.

Perhaps there was a way for an outsider buying the Mountain Tract to come to some agreement with the people who believed that no man had the right to its exclusive use. Perhaps someone particularly sensitive to the history and culture of the valley could have satisfied everyone by, say, permitting some limited wood gathering and hunting or even by making available a section of the land. Seventy-seven thousand acres, after all, provides some margin for negotiations. Or perhaps, as Taylor later claimed, any outsider who bought the Mountain Tract would have met great resistance in Costilla County no matter how diplomatic he was. There is no way to know, since Taylor was not by nature a man who dealt in gestures of conciliation or assurances of mutual respect. At the time he bought the Mountain Tract, he was forty years old, and in North Carolina he had already made a lot of money in a business in which successful men are more likely to be admired for their toughness than their diplomacy. In North Carolina, Taylor was known as a man who took a broad view of what land he had a right to cut timber on—an attitude that had often resulted in angry confrontations and long court battles about who had title to what. Someone who had observed his career in North Carolina said recently, “He’s the kind of man who has probably spent more money defending the land he got than he did buying it.” Taylor was also a man unawed by firearms. He had apparently faced peo-



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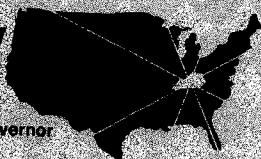
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ple in North Carolina whose response to an argument over ownership of land was not to threaten legal action but to threaten to go get a shotgun. Many years ago, he was convicted of carrying a concealed weapon—the legal and customary way for someone expecting trouble in North Carolina to carry a weapon being in full view on the front seat of the car. Taylor took control of his land in Colorado aggressively, the way he might have taken control of disputed land in North Carolina. He went to the federal District Court in Denver to remove the cloud on the title, and he made it clear to the residents of Costilla County that absolutely no one would be allowed on his property without permission.

What the local people considered traditional rights on the Mountain Tract Taylor considered sloppy permissiveness by the previous owners. "I merely had the fortitude to do what's necessary," he said later. "If I hadn't, this thing would linger on forever."

Taylor put barriers across the roads that led into dead ends on the Mountain Tract, and lined the boundary of his land with barbed wire. He hired a manager and other employees, but he made regular trips from New Bern to his Colorado property—and, it seems, regular trips from his property to San Luis to complain about not being protected against trespassing and poaching. From the beginning, the resentment among people in Costilla County about what had become of the Mountain Tract seemed to revolve around two issues. One was the fence. The other was Jack Taylor. Even before the fence was erected, there was a feeling that Taylor was a man who lacked respect for the people of the valley—an arrogant man who believed he was superior to rural people with Spanish names. Then, in 1961, Taylor and two of his hands caught three young men from a nearby village on the Mountain Tract. Taylor said later that the young men were tracked from a vandalized trailer and bulldozer, were photographed for identification, and were harmed only to the extent necessary to subdue one who was trying to reach his gun. The young men said that, having wandered onto the Taylor property searching for a stray cow, they had been seized and beaten. Taylor and his employees were charged with a variety of felonies, and that night an angry crowd that had gathered at the courthouse forced them to spend the night in jail more or less for their own protection. In a trial held in an adjoining county, Taylor and his men were convicted of simple assault and fined.



People in Costilla County, who speak of the incident as if it happened last week, often use it to define the sort of man they believe Jack Taylor to be.

In federal court, Taylor cleared the title to his land. The judge acknowledged that people in that part of the San Luis Valley had over many years come to believe in their right to use the Mountain Tract to graze a few head of cattle and cut aspens for their corrals and gather piñon wood for their fires. But the statement of settlers' rights that Beaubien had left was, the judge said,

meant as a set of regulations rather than a legally binding deed; the settlers' descendants could provide no documents to prove their rights to use any land except some specific tracts like the *vega*, or community grazing land, that lay outside the Mountain Tract. In the judge's view, the descendants of the settlers had come to think of the Mountain Tract as communal land merely because it was the last of the grant left unfenced, and the very fact that the rest of the million acres had been fenced by private buyers demonstrated to him that there had been no intention of preventing owners such as Taylor from maintaining Sangre de Cristo land as exclusive private property. Compared to a lot of land Taylor had managed to win title to in North Carolina, the Mountain Tract had a title that was legally quite clear—easily traced through only a few owners back to Don Carlos Beaubien. "That title's just as clean as a whistle," Taylor said later. "No breaks. No clouds. The so-called cloud was just someone yelling 'I got rights!'"

By the time the Circuit Court of Appeals had upheld the District Court, in 1967, the Association for Civic Rights had dissolved, its members broke and discouraged. Taylor tried cutting timber on the Mountain Tract for a while, and eventually, after building a house and a lodge, carried on a business of permitting big-game hunting for a fee. The population of Costilla County, only a few thousand when Taylor bought the Mountain Tract, fell steadily—a decline that some blamed on the inability of many people to make ends meet without the game and wood and grazing land the Mountain Tract had always provided, and others attributed to normal economic pressures that steadily drove rural people from marginal agricultural land to cities like Pueblo or Denver. Taylor continued to complain about poaching and vandalism—particularly from villages like Chama and San Francisco that lay just outside his



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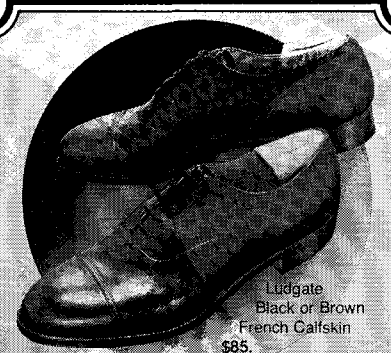
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fence—and about the unwillingness of local law-enforcement officials to do anything about it. The local people complained that Taylor was setting himself up as a dictator who could make his own law—confiscating rifles or equipment from trespassers as fees, shooting horses out from under people who came onto his land. (Taylor acknowledged seizing equipment, if not shooting horses, claiming that his law was the only law available.) In a way, though, the years between the mid-sixties and the mid-seventies amounted to a form of peace—without changing the views of Costilla County people on either issue raised by the purchase. They still saw Taylor as an arrogant and brutal and probably racist outsider. They still believed that, fence or no fence, the descendants of the *pobladores* had a right to graze animals and picnic and hunt and cut aspens and gather firewood on the Mountain Tract.

IN the years after the Court of Appeals decision favoring Taylor, some of the men who had led the opposition to him died, and some of them more or less resigned themselves to Taylor's victory. But then, around 1974, a new generation of Costilla County residents—young men who had been children when Taylor bought the property—began to question whether Taylor could really keep the local people off his land and whether their fathers and grandfathers had fought hard enough to prevent him from doing so. A lot had happened among Spanish-speaking people in the Southwest in the years after the mid-sixties—the Alianza that Reies Lopez Tijerina organized in Rio Arriba County around claims of Spanish ownership of the old land grants, the militant civil-rights movements in cities like Denver. A lot had happened to the young men in Costilla County. Some of them had been to the city. Some of them had been to Vietnam. A few had even been to college. The sheriff of Costilla County talks about the Mountain Tract difficulties as something brought on by a Southern racist taking the law into his own hands; the sheriff's son talks about it as an example of Anglo land expropriation that can be understood only within the context of the Texas Annexation and the American concept of Manifest Destiny and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the land thievery engineered by a late-nineteenth-century cartel known as the Santa Fe Ring. Middle-aged people in San Luis tend to refer to themselves as Spanish, to distinguish themselves from



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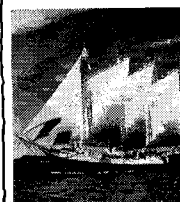
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later arrivals from Mexico; some of their sons and daughters refer to themselves as Chicanos, or even Mestizos. A new association was formed in 1974, led by a Vietnam veteran named Pete Espinoza, who was later named deputy sheriff. "Our parents got scared," Espinoza told Jane Earle, of the *Denver Post*, soon after the association was formed. "But it's different with us now."

In the summer of 1974, under pressure from the young people during an election campaign, the county commissioners and the sheriff had the barriers removed from Mountain Tract roads—an act that apparently inspired the sort of street celebration that is ordinarily seen in San Luis only on the festival of Santa Ana, the patron saint of the village. Taylor replaced the barriers under protection of a court order that enjoined the sheriff from so much as stepping on the property, but there was not much he could do to protect twenty miles of fence from people who cut the barbed wire and entered on horseback. In southern Costilla County, a young man who felt the need to shoot up a sign or destroy a bridge—whether he was the type of young man who knew anything about the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo or not—apparently had no trouble deciding where to do it. Taylor began making a list of allegations—acts of vandalism and of incidents in which guests or employees had been intimidated. He even claimed that one afternoon in Chama he had been shot at.

The rhetoric of the young people tended to treat Taylor's ownership of the Mountain Tract within the historical pattern of Anglos taking over Spanish land, and Taylor began to say that his harassment was based on his being an Anglo—or to say, on occasions when he was not being careful about his choice of words, that his harassment was based on his being a white. The more Taylor talked about being involved in a racial dispute the more he confirmed the belief of Costilla County people that he was a racist. One of the first remarks that almost anyone in Costilla County makes about Taylor is something like "He thought he could come here and treat us the way he treats the blacks in the South." It is difficult to tell how people in San Luis, Colorado, knew how Taylor treats blacks in the South; there are, after all, plenty of white liberals in North Carolina. As it happens, though, he is the sort of man who expresses his opposition to school integration largely in terms of black people in general having



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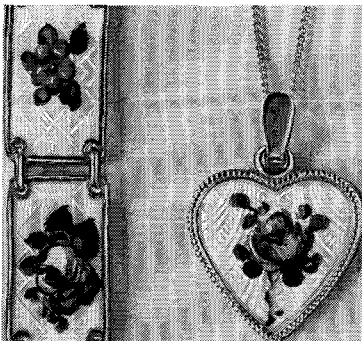
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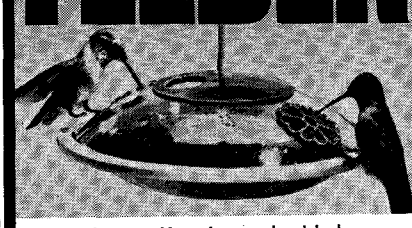
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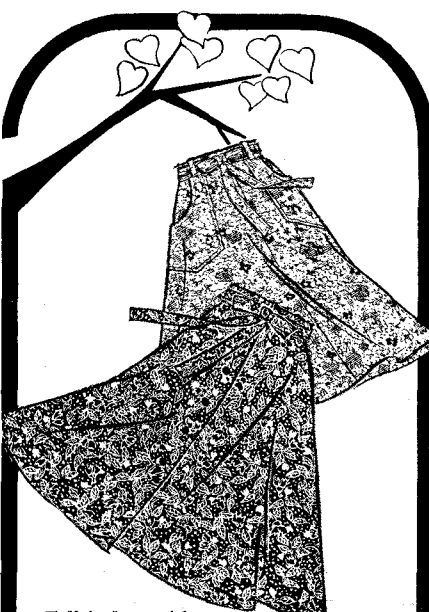
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poor moral standards, and who defends himself against suspicion of racism by recalling the headstones he has erected for loyal black employees or by saying, "I don't hate nigras; I hate the people who are trying to shove them down our throats." It is easy to tell how people in San Luis, Colorado, knew precisely the way Taylor feels about people with Spanish names, if their contact with him left them any doubt; they read his views in the *News and Observer* of Raleigh, North Carolina, the clippings having been sent to Colorado by one of the people in North Carolina who dislike Taylor enough to furnish a county official in San Luis with any information they believe may be damaging. In a taped interview with Pat Stith, of the *News and Observer*, in 1974, Taylor said, "That's what the anti-Anglo thing is, it's an inferiority complex. They know they're not equal, mentally or physically, to a white man and that's why they stick together so." When people in Costilla County talk about Taylor's "attitude," as they constantly do, they are often referring to his views on race. "People did believe that they had rights to that land, but they would have abided by the courts," a county official said recently. "They would have said, 'Well, we lost.' Except for his attitude."

Last October, while Taylor was sleeping alone in the house he had built on the Mountain Tract, several bullets came through the roof. One of them shattered his ankle. Some people in San Luis say that Taylor was shot not by locals but by disgruntled hunters he had argued with over fees; some people in San Luis say that Taylor was shot by locals and probably by locals who regretted only that they had failed to kill him. There are many Spanish people in Costilla County who deplore violence, and even a few who say that the owner of the Mountain Tract has every right to keep anyone he pleases off his land. But it is difficult to find anyone with any sympathy for Jack Taylor.

EVEN before he was shot, Taylor had, through North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms, approached the Justice Department with the claim that he, as an Anglo in a predominantly Spanish county, was being deprived of his right to property and to police protection because of his race. He has increasingly claimed, in fact, that the young people who now oppose him are engaged not in an argument with Jack Taylor but in a conspiracy to drive all Anglos out of southern Costilla County. Whether because of a conspiracy or because of some fallout from the Taylor



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dispute, at least one Anglo rancher has left the area since the shooting out of fear for the safety of himself and his family. Some Anglo counter-culture types have also left, although so many Anglo counter-culture types have been driven out of Spanish villages in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in the past decade that sudden exoduses of people in beards and beads and buckskin are more or less routine. County officials say that many Anglos have lived peacefully in Costilla County for years. The publisher Malcolm Forbes, who owns the huge Trinchera Ranch north of the Mountain Tract, gets along well with the local people—perhaps because Trinchera was fenced long before he bought it or because it is not as convenient as the Mountain Tract for poachers from small villages or because it employs a number of locals for ranch work and construction or because Forbes has gone out of his way to be lenient about such matters as firewood gathering or, in Taylor's view, because the Trinchera management would rather ignore unconscionable poaching and vandalism than frighten away potential buyers for houses on a section of the ranch that has been subdivided.

Since the shooting, there have been some mild attempts at conciliation by Taylor. His lawyer has written the county offering five thousand acres of recreation land in return for a guarantee of law protection and some concessions on tax and eminent-domain disputes Taylor is having with the county—adding that he found it chilling to offer land for law protection that every American should assume was his by right. One county commissioner has been told that Taylor might be willing to provide a couple of college scholarships for Costilla County young people. But people in Costilla County say that Jack Taylor's efforts at neighborliness have come sixteen years too late. The commissioner who was approached about scholarships says that any family sending a son or daughter to college on Taylor's money might bear the stigma for several generations. "One of his people asked me what he could do," a local official said recently. "I said, 'What he could do is change his god-dam attitude.'"

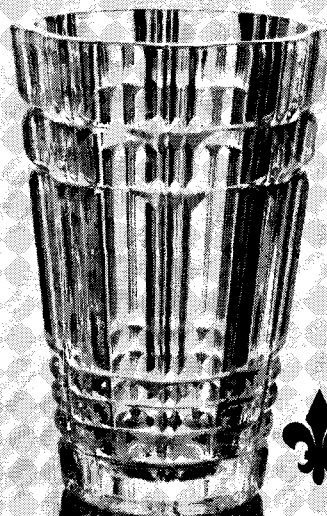
Taylor's attitude remains unchanged. He expresses no regrets at having taken a hard line from the beginning. "It would have been a lot cheaper to pay someone off," he said not long ago. "But it just goes kind of against the grain to do everything the Mexican way—with bribery." Finding himself the minority looking for federal protection—the person who believes, as blacks

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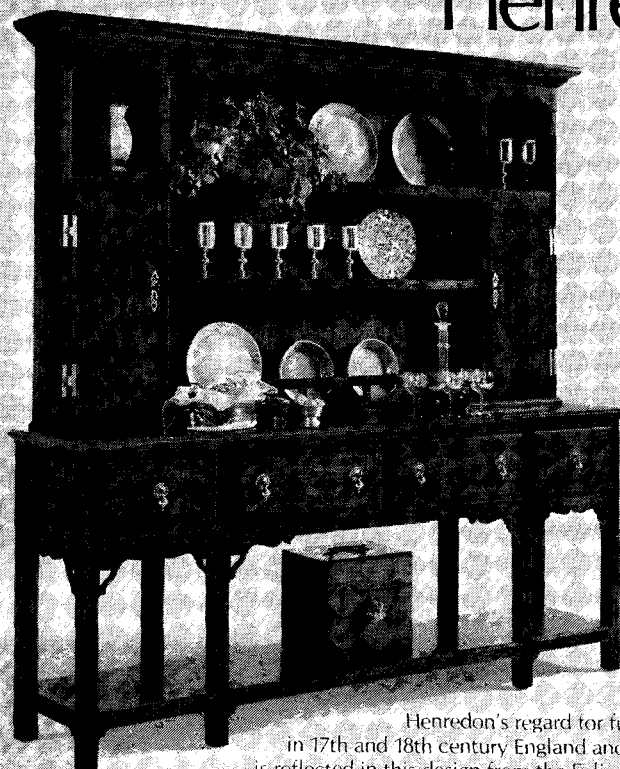
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in Mississippi used to believe, that the local law and his tormentors are the same people—has apparently not changed his views on the evils of federal meddlers shoving people down other people's throats. It seems merely to have confirmed his belief that the government and the press are now loaded in favor of the minorities. "Can you visualize what would have happened if I had been a Negro and they were all Anglos and I had been treated that way?" he asked a recent visitor to his office in New Bern. "They would have had Sherman tanks in there within three days."

Taylor has not been back to Costilla County since the night he was shot. Through his attorneys, he has made an enormous effort to have the shooting and what he believes to be his lack of police protection investigated by authorities outside the county. The federal grand jury in Denver has agreed to investigate, and Taylor says that even one indictment and conviction would end what he believes is a widespread feeling that he can be harassed or even shot at with impunity. Since the shooting, there has also been a revival of talk about an old plan to resolve the dispute by working out some trade of the Mountain Tract to a federal agency like the Forest Service for similar land elsewhere. A few young militants in Costilla County are opposed to such a trade, on the theory that the land doesn't belong to the Forest Service any more than it belongs to Taylor—the Forest Service, in fact, has for years been at the center of grazing disputes in New Mexico—but just about everyone else in the county is for it. Taylor says that talk of a trade is basically just a way for politicians to appeal to the Mexican vote, but he also says he would be willing to go along if appropriate land is found. He says both his timber and his hunting businesses have suffered greatly from the troubles. An attempt to sell the land now would be something on the order of a distress sale. "Mr. Taylor wants to raise the white flag," one of the people working on his behalf said not long ago. "He's just having trouble finding a flagpole." The deed to the Mountain Tract may be clean as a whistle, but, as it turned out in Costilla County, a man sometimes owns only the land his neighbors acknowledge he owns.

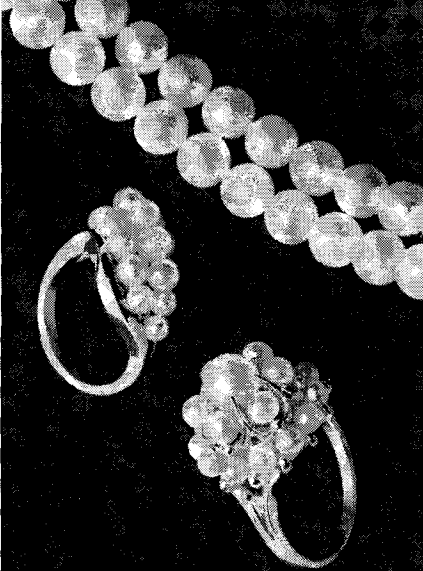
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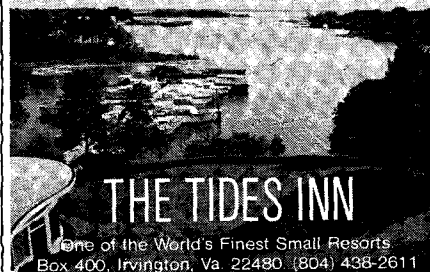
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Diana and Nikon

THE house of American photography has many mansions, which, until a few years ago, were completely sealed off from one another. There was the exalted cult of art photography, founded by Alfred Stieglitz and enshrined first in Stieglitz's beautiful, unreadable journal *Camera Work* and at his "291" gallery, and subsequently at the Museum of Modern Art here and the George Eastman House in Rochester. There was photojournalism, brought into being by the Brady group during the Civil War and coming of age in the pages of *Life* and *Look*, where it achieved a universality that photography had never previously enjoyed. There were the various forms of commercial photography: advertising, publicity, textbook illustration, studio portraiture, scientific and technical. There was the special field of fashion photography. There was the field, limited to a few collectors, of antique photography. Finally, scarcely noticed but increasingly ubiquitous, there was snapshot photography, which put the portrait studio out of business as cameras became cheaper and easier to use and families could create their own records of marriages, births, graduations, etc., as well as any less momentous incident of family life at which someone happened to aim a Kodak.

In 1966, John Szarkowski, the director of the Department of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art, had the novel idea of removing the walls between all these compartments and looking at photography whole, as a phenomenon that embraces the family snapshot as well as the Weston pepper, and that has properties inherent in every photograph taken. With his critical anthology "The Photographer's Eye" (Museum of Modern Art, 1966), Szarkowski proposed to get at photography's essential nature by examining nineteenth-century *cartes de visite*, newspaper pictures, technical and scientific photographs, snapshots, and other vernacular forms, rather than just the art photographs by Nadar, Cameron, Stieglitz, Steichen, Weston, and the rest. A further novelty of this "investigation of what photographs look like, and of why they look that way" was Szarkowski's idea of plucking the photographs from their familiar contexts as newspaper pictures or snapshots or art photographs and arranging them ac-

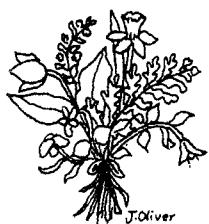
cording to how they might exemplify and illuminate five "characteristics and problems that have seemed inherent in the medium," which Szarkowski had isolated and named "The Thing Itself," "The Detail," "The Frame," "Time," and "Vantage Point." Accordingly, in the chapter devoted to "The Thing Itself," Edward Weston's portrait of Nahui Olin appears next to an unknown nineteenth-century photographer's portrait of Chief Medicine Bottle in captivity; in the section on "Time," Henri Cartier-Bresson's "Children Playing in Ruins" faces a picture of some men hanging around a barbershop taken by another anonymous photographer; and under "The Frame," André Kertész's "Billboard" is placed next to a snapshot taken by Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt of her husband playing ball with children at Sagamore Hill.

A surprising and disturbing impression emerges from this mélange of artistic and non-artistic photographs. One would expect the non-artistic pictures to suffer when compared to the conscious works of art that surround them, but, oddly enough, they do not. The picture of the Indian chief is as beautiful and as moving as the Weston portrait; the moment captured by the photographer in front of the barbershop is no less decisive than Cartier-Bresson's in the ruins; Mrs. Roosevelt's snapshot may even have an edge on Kertész's somewhat static composition. Perusing "The Photographer's Eye" is a shattering experience for the advocate of photography's claims as an art form. The accepted notion that in the hands of a great talent, and by dint of long study and extraordinary effort, photography can overcome its mechanical nature and ascend to the level of art is overturned by Szarkowski's anthology, whose every specimen is (or, as the case may be, isn't) a work of art.

Szarkowski cites John A. Kouwenhoven's seminal study "Made in America" (1948)—in which vernacular forms of design, architecture, painting, writing, and music are resuscitated from neglect, held up as expressions of our most vital national energies, and contrasted with the less vigorous fine-art forms derived from aristocratic European sources—as the inspiration for his approach in "The Photographer's Eye." But there is a significant differ-

ence between the two studies. For where Kouwenhoven's examples underscore the contrast between the "fine-art" and the "functional" traditions, Szarkowski's create the opposite impression—one of their *sameness*. The "functional" photographs in his book not only are the aesthetic peers of the "fine-art" photographs but are in every other way indistinguishable from them. It almost seems as if every master photograph strainfully created by an art photographer has an equivalent in the unself-conscious vernacular of commercial or news or amateur photography. The cover picture of "The Photographer's Eye," for example—a view of a poor person's bedroom, which one immediately recognizes as a Walker Evans interior, with its chipped metal bedstead, cheap wooden dresser, small marble sink, dense arrangement of photographs on the flower-papered wall, and (the characteristic incongruous detail that gives Evans' work its startling metaphorical eloquence) a medical eye chart nailed to the door—turns out not to be by Evans at all but to be a picture by an unknown photographer found in the files of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

Any question of Szarkowski's having mischievously stacked the deck—of his having illustrated "The Photographer's Eye" with rare, uncharacteristically artful vernacular works—has been dispelled by developments that followed the book's publication. Thousands of vernacular photographs that have since been unearthed have aesthetic qualities that equal, if they do not surpass, anything in the book, and show the same singular lack of stylistic distinctiveness. For where other mediums offer clear stylistic distinctions between their academic, folk, and vernacular productions—a Rousseau and a Hicks have their special quality as primitives that sets them apart from a Rembrandt and a Cézanne; thatched huts are different in kind from skyscrapers; the folk song is distinct from the art song—photography has neither a primitive style nor a commercial style nor a reportorial style nor a child's style. There is nothing in Jacques Henri Lartigue's photography to betray that he was only ten years old when he took some of his most distinguished pictures; or in James Van DerZee's portraits to show that he was a poor-neighborhood studio photographer rather than a Cecil Beaton (the fact that his subjects were black does, in unfortunate actuality, spell out their social status, but this is sociological rather than photographic information); or in Weegee's famous picture "The Critic" to show that he worked for *PM*





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rather than for Posterity. The vernacular alternative to the fine-art tradition that Szarkowski set forth in his book (and that he continues to promote in other writings and in the exhibitions he mounts at the museum) proved to be no alternative at all; the quest for vernacular photography that followed Szarkowski's lead has been like an archeological expedition that, digging around Cold Comfort Farm, unearths the Palace of Knossos—and can't quite grasp the significance of the discovery.

Or doesn't want to. For the depreciating implications of these demonstrations of photography's unbounded and undifferentiated aesthetic richness can hardly be lost on the various curators, dealers, collectors, teachers, critics, and practitioners who make up today's photography establishment, and who have a vested interest in keeping photography a manageable, finite art form. If every family album and historical society and old copy of *Life* is a source of art photography (and every camera a potential source), then what is all the trade in, study of, fuss over, writing on, pains taken with photography about? Few members of the photographic community have cared to look at this question (photography has, after all, only just pushed its way into the art market, so why instantly rock the boat?), and most have simply (if nervously) carried on as though nothing had happened—upholding the heavy-breathing traditions of Stieglitz, Steichen, Weston, et al., promoting the equal right of photographs to hang in museums with paintings, cherishing the fine print, distinguishing between good and bad work in terms of the pictorial aesthetic thrown up by a small body of acknowledged masterpieces, and making these masterpieces available to students and lovers of photography, in the way that the classical repertory is kept before concertgoers.

At the opposite pole, there is a group of avant-garde photographers and theorists who will have none of this genteel, retrograde art-photography stuff, and who, far from seeing the endless sprawl of anonymous, commercial, and amateur pictures as a threatening encroachment and a monstrous competitor, embrace it as a repository of the revealed truth about photography's proper purposes and future directions. This radical school takes Szarkowski's pioneer work to its next logical step, and in repudiating the lessons of the masters of art photography repudiates also the (consciously or unconsciously) art-derived or art-in-

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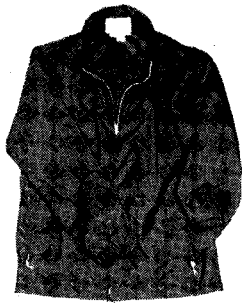
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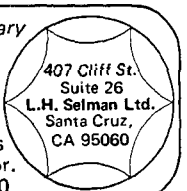
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fluent vernacular photographs that appeared to such startling effect in the Szarkowski anthology. Instead, the central focus of this group's researches, and the starting point, model, and guide of its artistic endeavors, is the most inartistic (and presumably most purely photographic) form of all—the home snapshot. The attributes previously sought by photographers—strong design, orderly composition, control over tonal values, lucidity of content, good print quality—have been stood on their heads, and the qualities now courted are formlessness, rawness, clutter, accident, and other manifestations of the camera's formidable capacity for imposing disorder on reality—for transforming, say, a serene gathering of nice-looking people in pleasant surroundings (as one had perceived it) into a chaotic mess of lamp cords, rumpled Kleenexes, ugly food, ill-fitting clothes, grotesque gestures, and vapid expressions.

A look at some of the work being done in this vein and a sense of some of the problems and confusions of this school are afforded by a book called "The Snapshot" (Aperture, 1974), which, according to its editor, Jonathan Green, proposes to examine "the vitality and ambiguity of the naïve home snapshot and its bearing upon a variety of approaches used by contemporary photographers" through a series of articles, interviews, and portfolios. "The photographers represented here are not snapshooters but sophisticated photographers," Green feels impelled to point out. "Yet their intentional pursuit of the plastic controls and visual richness hinted at in the work of the casual amateur, or their explorations of familial subject matter, involves their work with the ongoing tradition of the home snapshot." Green's introduction is followed by an essay in praise of the snapshot, written by the elusive, legendary photographer and teacher Lisette Model, who dwells on its special quality of innocence—a quality, she feels, that the professional photographer can never achieve: "He may try to imitate the snapshot. He may wait on purpose for the loose, unconventional moment. The moment may be unstructured, but the photographer is not. He may make a masterpiece by selecting the moment but he can never make a snapshot." Model goes on to describe the snapshotter's work: "The picture isn't straight. It isn't done well. It isn't composed. It isn't thought out. And out of this imbalance, and out of this not knowing, and out of this real innocence toward the medium comes

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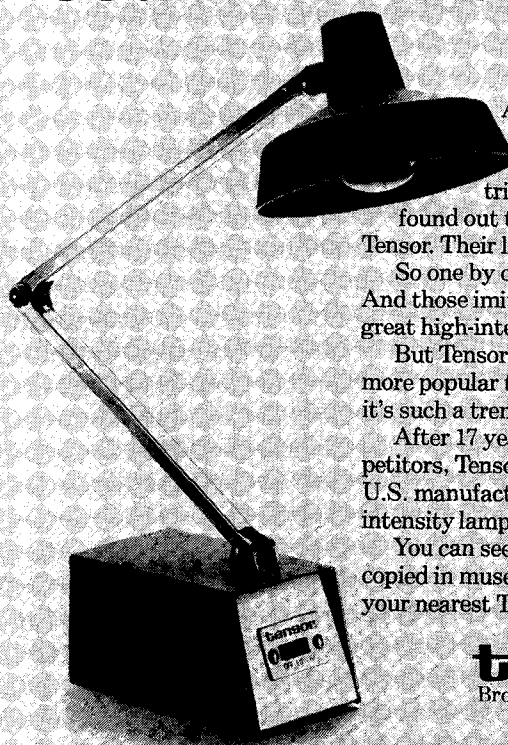
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an enormous vitality and expression of life." She concludes, "We are all so overwhelmed by culture and by imitation culture that it is a relief to see something which is done directly, without any intention of being good or bad, done only because one wants to do it."

This is all very appealing (if pernicious), but it is a strange statement to put in a book filled with imitation snapshots taken by "sophisticated photographers." However, the pictures by Garry Winogrand, Emmet Gowin, Nancy Rexroth, Richard Albertine, Robert Frank, and others that follow flatly contradict Model's contention that snapshots are the exclusive province of the innocent amateur and that the professional "can never make a snapshot." Like the non-art pictures in Szarkowski's book which are indistinguishable from the artistic ones, the fake snapshots in "The Snapshot" are indistinguishable from real snapshots. In the Gowin portfolio are several pictures of a young woman who is always wearing the same glum, closed expression—an expression one instantly recognizes as belonging to a person who hates to have his or her picture taken and is submitting with the worst possible grace to the obnoxious attentions of a snapshooter. (The woman in the fake snapshots is the photographer's evidently genuinely aggrieved wife.) Garry Winogrand's messy street pictures—full of litter, parts of cars and buses, cut-off heads, aimless groups of people, pointless activity—strike a similarly responsive chord in the aficionado of lousy snapshots. Robert Frank's terrible Polaroid pictures of his friends are like anyone else's terrible Polaroids. Nancy Rexroth's dreary, gray, blurred little pictures taken with a dollar-fifty toy camera called the Diana ("The company also makes a cheaper model that squirts water when you press the shutter," Rexroth writes) look like the dreary, gray, blurred little pictures that children briefly take with the toy cameras they get for Christmas before turning to more gratifying pastimes.

They also look like works of avant-garde art. Photography perhaps more readily than any other medium complies with the Duchampian Dictate—"If I call it art, it becomes art"—whereby a urinal assumes the stature of a work of sculpture. The dullest, most inept and inconsequential snapshot, when isolated, framed (on a wall or by the margins of a book), and paid attention to, takes on all the uncanny significance, fascination, and



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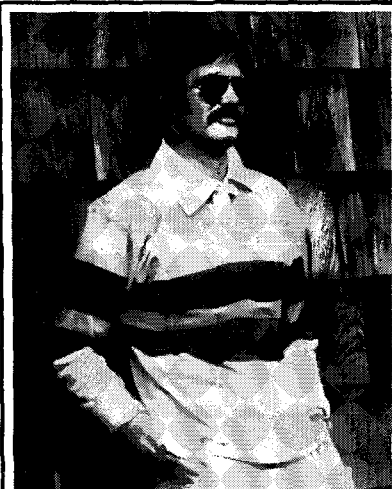
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beauty of R. Mutt's fountain or the bicycle wheel or the bottle rack. Removed from their normal context of the playroom wastebasket and placed in that of an art book, the Rexroth pictures assume the aspect of elegant, ironic studies of pattern, light, texture, and spatial relations; the I-am-Art claims of the other pictures in the book are no less compelling. But here again photography's irrepressible egalitarianism puts its big foot in and kicks the ground out from under the art photographer's position. The philistine who used to come to the Museum of Modern Art and sneer, "I could do that," has been answered; the philistine who comes to the Light Gallery and calmly observes, "I *have* done that," remains an unanswerable, threatening presence.

Photography has never had it so good—prices of prints are soaring, museum exhibitions are increasing, photography books pour from the presses, university departments of photography continue to form, art journals devote more and more space to reviewing photography shows—and the photographer has never had it so hard. Caught between the dead hand of traditional art photography and the shaking, fumbling one of the snapshot school, he may well despair. Some photographers have dealt with the dilemma by making collages, montages, paintings, drawings, wall hangings, and narratives that incorporate photographs or that employ dark-room processes but are not photographs themselves—have, in effect, left off being photographers. Others, though sticking to photographic methods and materials, have been no less feckless in their use of photography to create imitations of contemporary art work. (There are Abstract Expressionist, Conceptual, and even Photo-Realist photographs being made.) Everything is being tried, but nothing seems to dispel the malaise that hangs over contemporary photography or the uneasiness, lack of confidence, alienation, and dislocation that afflict the contemporary photographer. With the exception of the late Diane Arbus, no photographer has emerged during the last forty years who can be discussed in the same breath as Stieglitz, Weston, Strand, Cartier-Bresson, and Kertész. It may be that the golden age created by these and a few other masters is a single, aberrant episode in a medium whose truest purposes are fulfilled not by artists struggling against its mechanical grain but by artisans and amateurs letting it call the shots.

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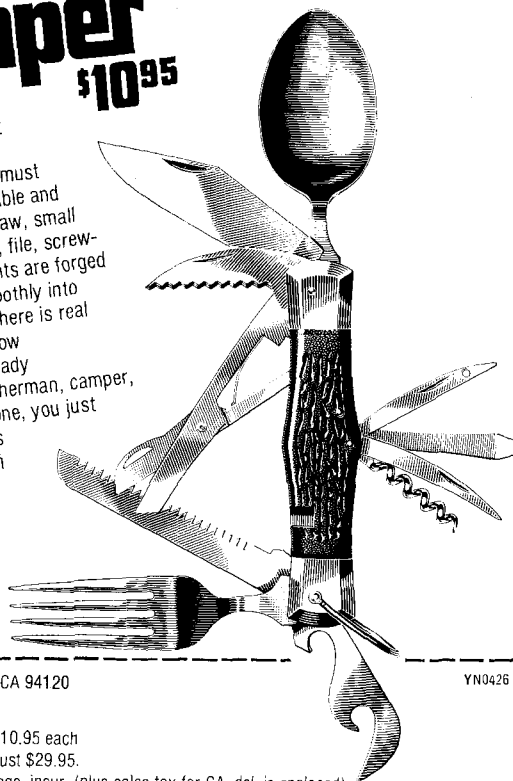
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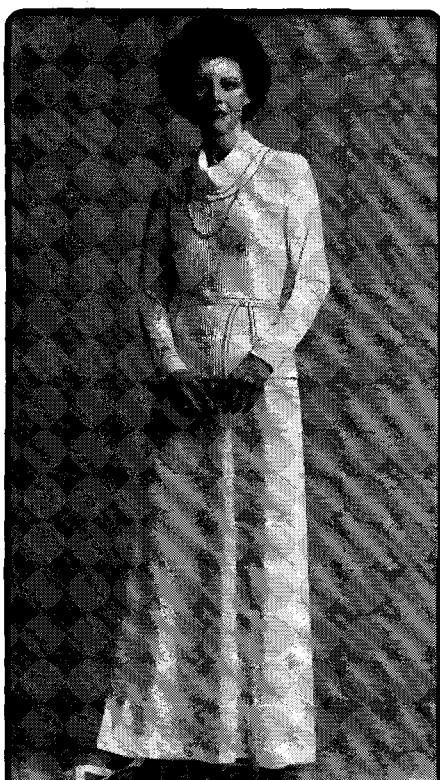
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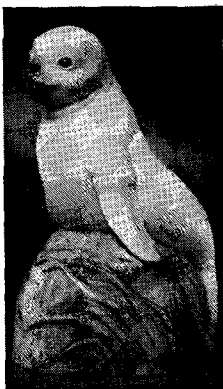
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THE hopes for Bold Forbes hung in the balance before the Wood Memorial at Aqueduct last Saturday. A month ago, he showed such headlong speed in the Bay Shore Stakes—seven furlongs in 1:20 4/5—that Laz Barrera, who trains him, decided not to run him in the Gotham Stakes, at a mile, but to use the time schooling him to relax and conserve his energy in a race. In this, Barrera was helped no end by Cordero in the horse's morning workouts. Bold Forbes was a quick study. In the Wood, at a mile and a furlong, he got off to a good start without bounding into the lead prematurely, and he didn't go to the front till he was about halfway down the backstretch. From there on, he was never headed, although for a moment it looked as if he might be when the field turned into the homestretch. Then Cordero goaded him, and he shot forward in a flash. At the finish, he was nearly five lengths ahead of the field; his time was 1:47 3/5, which set a stakes record and was only two ticks off the track record. On the Sly, the long shot of the lot, closed a big gap in the run through the stretch to take the place. Sonkisser was third, and he might have been second if Cojak hadn't barged into him a furlong from the wire. Bold Forbes won his first five starts in Puerto Rico last spring and the Tremont and the Saratoga Special in the summer, but he has yet to catch the fancy of Latin-Americans hereabouts to the degree that Canonero II did in 1971. When Canonero II ran for the Belmont Stakes that year, a crowd of 82,694—the largest ever at a track in this state—came out to see him.

Zen, if you haven't heard, did not run in the Wood; he developed a slight swelling in his right hind leg and was scratched. It wasn't serious, but his owners, the Whiteleys, were taking no chances. He hasn't been officially declared out of the Kentucky Derby, but he might as well be.

OUT in California, An Act and Telly's Pop finished out of the money (fifth and sixth) in the Hollywood Derby behind Crystal Water. Two animals with little form, Life's Hope and Double Discount, were second and third. The crowd must have

been happy, because Shoemaker rode the winner. With its more than \$200,000 in prize money, plus the entry and starting fees, the race had a gross value of \$240,250, making it one of the biggest jackpots of the year. Crystal Water's share was \$152,750. A near-black colt by Windy Sands, he's



had fair form this season, and Shoemaker, guiding him through the pack, was at his best. Mrs. Connie Ring, who owns Crystal Water and is an important figure in California racing, is said not to be too keen about running him in the Kentucky Derby, but I venture to guess that she will change her mind.

ART ROONEY, who owns the Pittsburgh Steelers, may have something almost as good going for him in Christopher R. At the Big A on the day before the Wood, Chris, carrying 131 pounds, polished off Mac Corkle, to whom he gave sixteen, and Gallant Bob (who used to give *him* weight), along with five other first-rate sprinters in the Gravesend Handicap, at six furlongs, for his sixth straight.

WELL, the two-dollar bill is circulating again. Back in the days of the bookmakers, to get a deuce was said to be bad luck. I don't know how the superstition came about, but I can tell you that whenever an old-timer got such a bill the first thing he'd do was tear off one of its corners to let the evil spirit out. The Treasury Department says that the practice used up a lot of two-dollar bills. Many race-trackers wouldn't accept them at all. To Sam Hildreth, a famous trainer of fifty years ago, who handled the horses of August Belmont and Harry F. Sinclair (though not at the same time, of course), they were anathema. If he happened to be handed one in change, he'd like as not scratch all the horses he had running that day and not make another bet. —AUDAX MINOR

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[From the Times]

The head of the National Union of Teachers called the cuts "catastrophic, the economics of bedlam," and the Royal Automobile Club, reacting to reductions in the rate of new road building, saw the plan as "another spoke in the wheel toward bringing Britain to a standstill."

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BOOKS

Russia

SIZE calls to size. Serious American journalism has a long tradition of thoughtful, lively, and independent observation in its reporting of life and affairs in the Soviet Union, and Robert Kaiser's "Russia" (Atheneum) and Hedrick Smith's "The Russians" (Quadrangle) sustain the tradition and in the present period of uncertainty about détente are very timely. Both authors speak Russian and for three years lived in Moscow, in the high-class ghetto reserved for foreign journalists; Mr. Kaiser was bureau chief for the *Washington Post*, and Mr. Smith was bureau chief for the *Times*. If it is unlucky that in many respects the books overlap and have an anecdotal similarity, there is a difference in manner and approach. Mr. Kaiser is more formal and can be said to examine the Soviet Union as a Communist society; he is especially controversial in a skeptical way about Russia as a military threat. He argues that the Russians use militarism as a bluff and with an eye to mischief but are in the long run prudent. (Eastern Europeans tell me, darkly, that alarm in Europe and America is the work of the American arms lobby, which is out of pocket since the Vietnam war.) Mr. Smith is rather more engaging in manner, and he stresses the Russianness of the Russians. The question for both authors is whether a country, largely Asiatic, which has not been formed by the great historical movements that have formed Europe and America is likely to be drawn to liberal democracy. Both think that if this does occur it is a long way off.

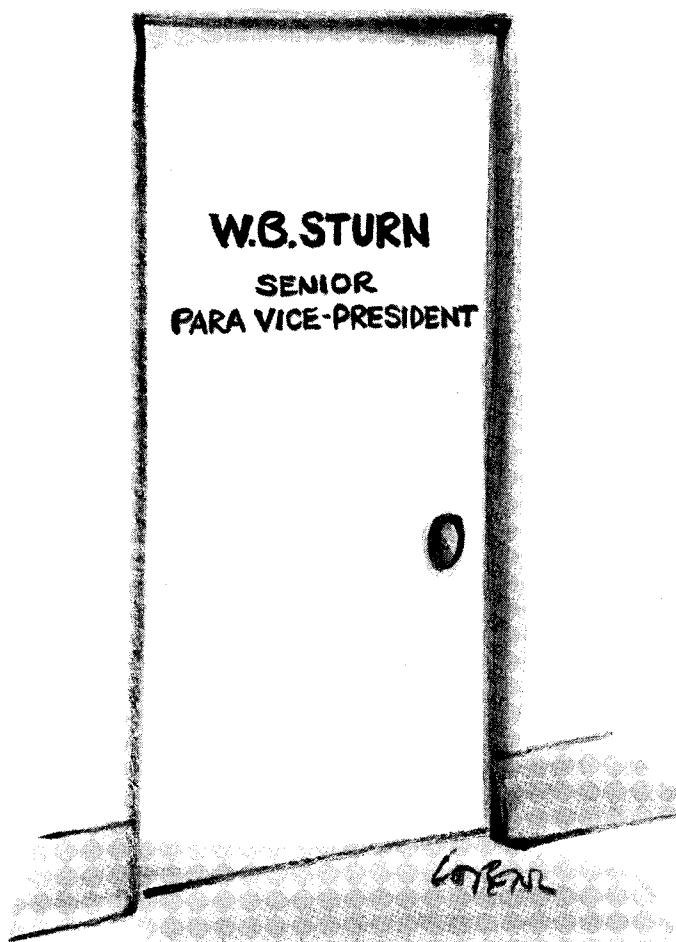
The task of the foreign journalist or, indeed, of any traveller in the Soviet Union is made difficult because of the mistrust of foreigners, even when the Russians wish to please and emulate them. Centuries of despotic, centralized government of a huge land mass have embedded suspicion and dissembling among Russians. They are quick to put on protective coloring, and the Janus face is second nature: the effect is to make them self-engrossed. At the height of his anger with this, Turgenev, the West-

erner, nevertheless told his French friends that whereas they were men of *la loi*, Russians were the "men of humanity," and went on to say that no one revered "the truth" more than the congenital Russian liar, whether he was a visionary, a patriot, or was simply enjoying his fictions for their own Oriental sake as an extension of his personality. I mention Turgenev because he cannot now be dismissed as the old-maidish inventor of out-of-date figures like the "superfluous man." After the Revolution, vehement Russian diplomats used to tell us that the people of his novels, and those of Gogol and, even more, Dostoevski, had magically ceased to exist. Today, their minds, if not their exact personages, have come to the surface again. The conflict between Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov is the conflict between Dostoevski and Turgenev—between the Holy Russia of the Slavophiles and the Westerner—reborn with new ambiguities. One had thought that the industrialization of Russia and the rise to great power had killed the quarrel for good. But then George Orwell's savage Big Brother has been replaced by innumerable little brothers of a newly sophisticated

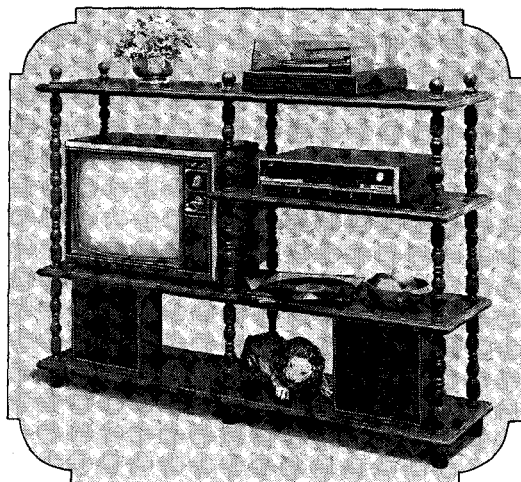
K.G.B. There is no longer the spyhole for the master in the wall of Chekhov's school at Taganrog: there is the Party watchdog.

Do the Russians resent this? Yes, but educated people who have had to resign themselves to despotism are often known to say that they personally do not yet feel quite at home with individual freedom. Despotism, as Mr. Kaiser and Mr. Smith say, offers the pleasures and skills of anarchy as the natural human resource. One soon learns that bureaucrats deal only with bureaucrats, planners only with planners: the public looks for a private way through the gaps. There are at least a million and perhaps two million people in labor camps and goodness knows how many on the "blacklist"—who for political reasons cannot get employment—but the direct murders of the Stalinist terror have gone. The new wealth and opportunities for consumers, especially in a showplace like Moscow, have created the tolerated anarchy of "*blat*"—getting what you need through friends and influence—the black market, and bribery. Mr. Kaiser's and Mr. Smith's opening chapters are rich in anecdotes about this. Some are very familiar; they are as old as items from Gogol's "Government Inspector." But there are striking new items.

For example, the home of the good things of life is Moscow. Everyone wants to leave the provinces, but the state does not want you to come to Moscow, because housing is very short. If you are allowed to stay in the big city for three days, you avoid hotels and disappear into the flats of friends, where you are not easily traced. To become a permanent resident you have to get a permit. A good ploy is to find a Moscow resident with whom you can contract a "paper marriage," for, say, fifteen hundred rubles. In six months, you get the agreed divorce. You reside. Housing is miserably short and you want an extra room to your flat: you form a group that disposes of, say, three flats and sort out your tenancies among



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you. Goods are still in fitful supply; queues are enormous. Join any one that is going; there will be *something* worth having, which you can sell at a profit or barter if you don't want it. Again, it is an enormous privilege to be allowed to travel abroad, but you don't go to, say, Italy to see the Mediterranean or the ruins of Pompeii: you go to load up at the shops and sell or exchange your loot when you get home. Perhaps you are a journalist, and you have bugging devices scattered in the walls or the ceiling of your flat. Put on a couple of conflicting jazz records while you talk to your friends, or go off ice-skating—as Mr. Kaiser and Mr. Smith had to do when they planned an interview with Solzhenitsyn. Are you ill? The state health system is dilatory and short of important medicines. Go to a doctor friend—doctors are among the lowest-paid workers—find out what *things* he needs, and he will gladly treat you privately. In short, anarchy is a counter-economy running beside the state economy and is tolerated.

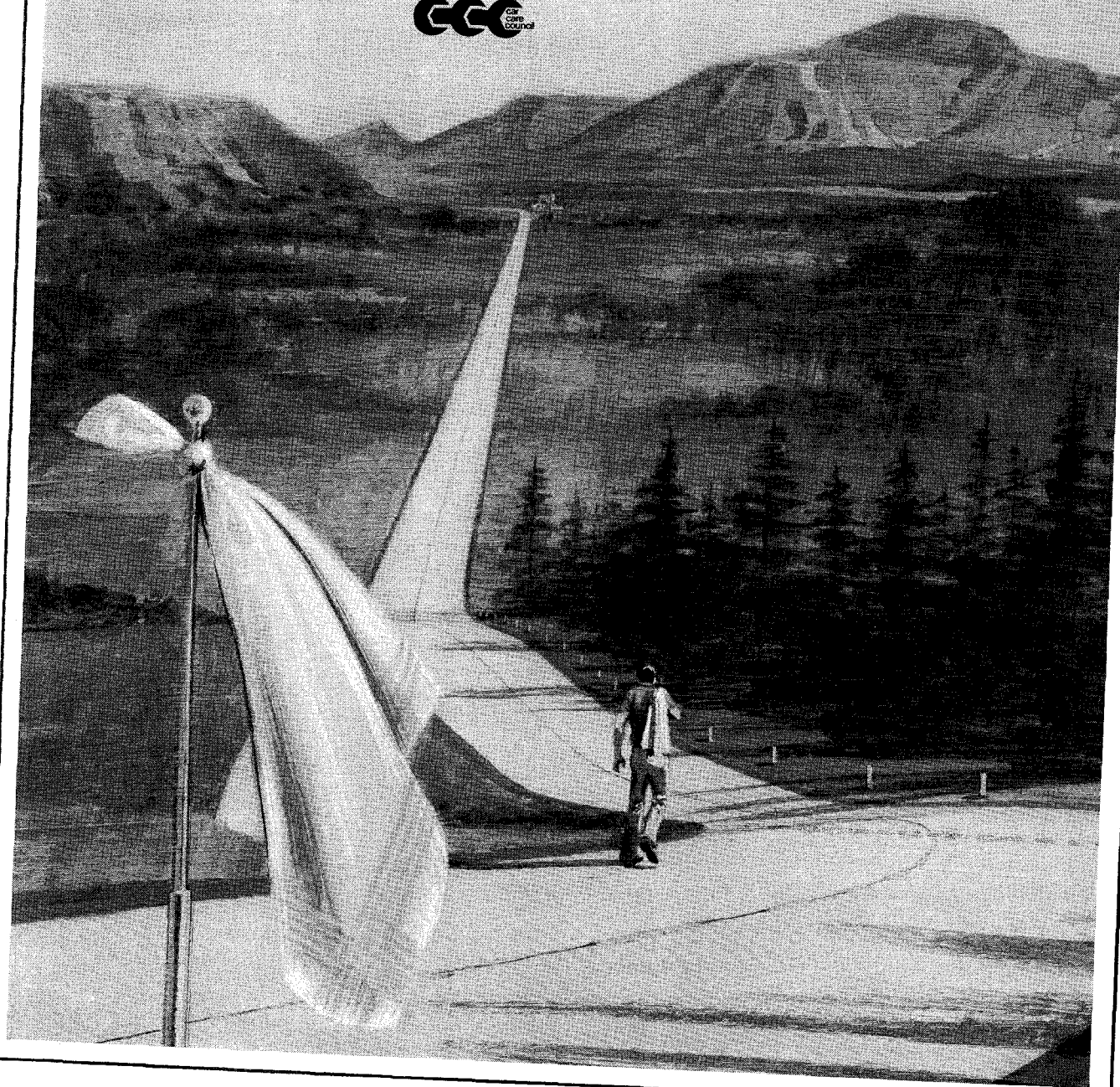
The question is what friends can you trust? This is a nightmare. But Russians have an extra sense of friendship which goes far beyond the pleasing chattering intercourse that, indeed, bores them when they go to dinner parties in the West: they long for those "soul-in-soul" friendships which Turgenev and Dostoevski used to describe, when friends strip their "souls" naked and reveal their "convictions." This is only possible now—as Mr. Smith points out—among those tiny groups of people who have somehow managed to lie low and drop out of the system. (A *samizdat* fable, "Nobody," which I have read recently, is about an ornithologist who has been edged out of his job for political reasons, and can communicate only silently with his cat. Eventually, he settles into a cage in the zoo with a loving and neurotic leopardless.) Ordinary people fall back on the traditional purgation of drinking to the point of insensibility, and drunkenness has increased—as it has in the West. The special secret of vodka is that it detaches the mind from the body—as Mr. Smith once found—and the shames, comic indignities, and horrors that occur are regarded as a necessary, even hygienic holiday from the daily human fate, or as a more complete fulfillment of it.

Both Mr. Kaiser and Mr. Smith are interesting about the rise of the privileged meritocracy, which is highly paid and is able to put its children on the profitable road. Its members get hold

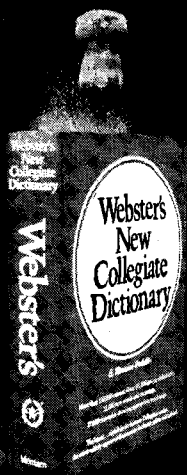
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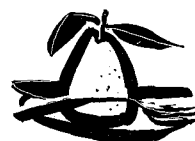


of coveted foreign things: they have cars. The younger generation will pay absurd sums for jeans, but they do not go in for the gaudy clothes of the American and European young. At heart, young Russians are genteel. The authorities do their best to head off tendencies to pop culture and rock and roll, and the press is agitated by the decline of ideological conviction. Mr. Smith is particularly interesting about the status of women. There are twenty million more women than men in the Soviet Union, and there is pride in the fact that they work beside men in the factories. But everyone knows that women do the lowest-paid work—hence the very large number of women doctors. Few rise to the top positions. Mr. Smith gives two reasons for this: the first is that the Russian attitude to women

is still really what it was in the nineteenth century; the second is that many women work only because their husbands cannot support a wife and family on their low pay. Housing is cheap, but housing space is too limited to allow for more than one child. Among women, he notices there is resentment both because birth-control devices are scarce and poor and women are driven to abortion—which has become legal once more since the death of Stalin—and because it is impossible to have the larger families they would like. There is considerable alarm about the fall in the birthrate in European Russia, and some fear of the great increase of population in Russian Asia. The divorce rate is very high. So, among students, is the prevalence of promiscuity, but the old Russian prudery insists that you can have sex so long as you don't read about it or discuss it as a matter of spiritual importance or interest.

We have heard much of this before, but Mr. Smith especially enlivens his analysis with portraits of people he has known. His children went to school in Russia, were taught on the memorizing principle and under strict discipline. Their games were serious war games. The baddies did not drop dead but were "executed." When he turns away from "problems" and gets out of Moscow, Mr. Smith is closer to what the Russians are like. He appreciates that under their reserve they are a very sentimental and romantic people and naturally tend to a collective will and the crowd. A Canadian would understand at once that they are connoisseurs of cold and that after the dusty summer and the rainy autumn

the first sniff of winter and dry air is an "animal liberation." Drab Moscow looks elegant when snow lines the windowsills. Off everybody rushes to the country to ski, while the anglers bore holes through the several feet of ice in the rivers and drop their lines. The general heroic wish is to go on to where the frost is harder; indeed, when he got to the phenomenal deep freeze of Siberia, Mr. Smith met the booster's pride in a climate that shortens the lives of most people who are not born to it. His description of the journey through Siberia is one of the best things in the book, for it brings home to



one the monotonous, scantily inhabited distances of the Asiatic desert, in which even the Ural Mountains seem no more than a bump in the landscape. The train crawled "like some creaking mer-

chant vessel patiently plying a vast inland sea . . . of gently undulating snowfields. . . . The snowbound hamlets with their weatherbeaten, smoking peasant *izbas*, floated past like unconnected islands. . . . Cities would suddenly loom up without the warning of suburbs" and as suddenly vanish. The brief stops at the stations were a kind of ship-to-shore affair, with the townspeople rushing to buy food from the dining car, while women shovelled coal onto the train or chipped the ice from the frozen couplings. At Bratsk, there was a Ukrainian Jew who was ecstatic about Siberia:

Broad-shouldered, square-jawed and irrepressibly ebullient, Sasha Gurevich had responded in his youth to the Communist Party's call for eager Komsomols to come build the world's mightiest dam and to hell with the hardships. He was an incurable romantic whose utopian faith in the wonders of industrialization was blended with undimmed eighteenth-century idealism about the perfectibility of man.

Gurevich was not disquieted by the Stalinist terror and was so completely the orthodox type that he went through the usual routine of praising Jack London and Walt Whitman and then recited Kipling's "If" in Russian and in perfect English. Bratsk is seven hundred and fifty miles farther north than Montreal, and Gurevich was contemptuous of the slackers in Moscow. We have to see his posterlike personality against a background of the labor camps and the vast number of people blacklisted for some minor act such as signing an appeal for a condemned poet or protesting repression in Czechoslovakia. In Siberia, the people Mr. Smith met spoke in the ferocious

clichés of chauvinistic propaganda about Chinese "militarism."

Mr. Kaiser says that the little brothers of the K.G.B. have refined their methods and have now completed their crackdown on dissidents. Ten years ago, hundreds of people in Moscow would sign protests of a liberal kind; now it would be difficult to find a dozen. Mr. Smith's portraits of Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov, and Roy Medvedev are deeply interesting. The two journalists had some practical difficulty with the first, who for their meeting had carefully prepared a declamation of great length. For several hours, he tried to insist on an interview in which he supplied the questions (a conventional interview is a matter that does sometimes antagonize great men, who naturally fear being put on the spot—the spot not being where their minds dwell). His suspicion and perhaps his pride were very Russian, but with the tact and the help of his wife, especially in precise phraseology, he did at last consent to answer the journalists' questions. Mr. Smith thought there might be some hangover from official, packaged education in his resistance, but I do not agree. All prophets have something of the ham actor, and both as the truth-telling novelist and as the exhaustive historian of the Gulag Solzhenitsyn is a master of the subtle and repeated rhythms of scathing irony and of words that have a real contemporary force and ring in the minds of Russian readers. He depends on the variations, and particularly the little words, of a talking style. Mr. Kaiser and Mr. Smith, of course, totally reject the view, which one sometimes hears, that he has a connection with the small right wing of militarist Slavophiles which is said to exist. Like Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn is fiercely opposed to militarism.

One can see why the unity between these dissidents broke up. Sakharov is the inward-turning man, the atomic scientist with a conscience who gave away his fortune to cancer research, and a Westerner who believes in liberalization and free elections. He is no actor but a shy, modest solitary who is forced to live bleakly and endures continual petty persecutions. The official line is that he is now an elderly whimsical eccentric. Why is he thought dangerous—so dangerous that he could not leave Russia even if he wished? The answer is that he is a heretic who does not believe that Socialist theory has created a better society—crime and alienation exist both in the capitalist West and in Russia. In saying such things, Sakharov, as Mr. Smith says,

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challenges the Communist Party's "monopoly over social thought.... For if in the modern age managers and engineers can run the economy, and administrators and bureaucrats can manage the government and diplomacy without ideological guidance, the Party is left without legitimacy and *raison d'être*." Roy Medvedev differs in being the cool dissident, the patient and astute gradualist, the detached philosopher and pragmatist who works within the system and argues that technology is exposing its cumbersome machinery. He is a cunning man who might be called "the loyal opposition." He had hopes that détente would be a liberalizing influence, but he now thinks that repression has increased. The arguments for believing that the Russian desire for international détente is serious are gone into very thoroughly by Mr. Kaiser. They can, of course, be disputed, but he shows that good relations with the capitalist countries are vital to the Soviet Union in one respect. The West controls the world market. I put these books down remembering Turgenev's words when he was called back to Russia as a young man:

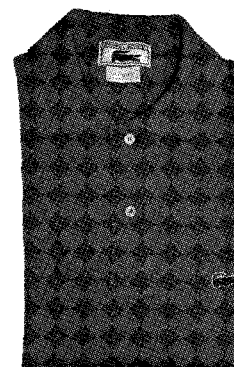
Russia is awaiting me—this immense sombre figure motionless and veiled like the Sphinx in Oedipus. Don't worry, Sphinx, I shall come back to you and you will be able to devour me at your leisure if I fail to solve your riddle. Leave me in peace a little longer! I shall come back to your steppes.

—V. S. PRITCHETT

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

SURVIVOR, by Marc Brandel (Simon & Schuster). An unlikely but (despite its sound) rather engaging concoction about a footloose young woman who is persuaded on the spur of the moment by a rich, mysterious art collector to hop around the world to try to find out everything she can about a famous dead painter she has always admired. She journeys to England, France, and Mexico to try to check the dates of some of Paul Tagliatti's paintings and also to find out if there are any as yet undiscovered extant works, and in the course of her travels she collides with some competitors—people who she soon discovers will stop at nothing to achieve their ends. Much of this is a bit hard to swallow, as is Mr. Brandel's device for letting us see what Tagliatti's life was really like—i.e., flashbacks accomplished via the young woman's empathetic psychic powers. But those who can



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GENERAL

SCOUNDREL TIME, by Lillian Hellman (Little, Brown). In this third excursion into autobiography—after “An Unfinished Woman” and “Pentimento”—Miss Hellman relates what befell her and some of her friends during the McCarthy period of the early nineteen-fifties. As a prominent political irregular who was also a conspicuously successful playwright and screenwriter, she was an easy mark for the heresy hunters. At her hearing before the House Un-American Activities Committee, she refused to act as an informer, and because of that refusal she was all but ruined for a number of years. She writes about these bad times for her and the country sparingly, without self-pity or self-righteousness, and even, at times, with humor. (There is a wonderful long anecdote about Henry Wallace.) In the end, Miss Hellman makes it clear that what really shocked and hurt her was the failure of any significant numbers of the American intellectual community to stand up and be counted.

THE SECULAR SCRIPTURE: A STUDY OF THE STRUCTURE OF ROMANCE, by Northrop Frye (Harvard). Northrop Frye has probably done as much as any modern critic to define the study of literature as a science in its own right, independent not only of the sometimes narrow interpretations laid down by authors but also of the imperial claims advanced by religion, psychoanalysis, and ideology. In this book, which comprises his Charles Eliot Norton lectures at Harvard, he presents the stories of romance—stories characterized by such motifs as “mysterious birth, oracular prophecies about the future contortions of the plot, foster parents, adventures which involve capture by pirates, narrow escapes from death, recognition of the true identity of the hero, and his eventual marriage with the heroine”—as forming a “secular scripture,” parallel to the sacred scripture represented chiefly by the Bible and its derivatives. While the Biblical tradition has historically possessed a central authority, Mr. Frye says, the tradition of romance has a special appeal for the lover of fiction: “Romance is the structural core of all fic-



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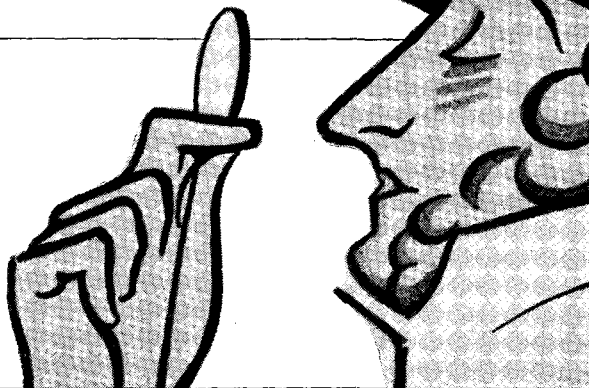
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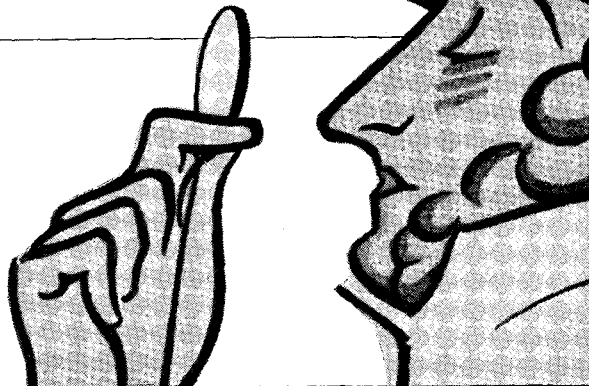
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tion." His discussion of romance touches on a huge range of works, from the classical period onward, and while an ordinary reader may not be able to judge the appropriateness of many of the references, he may appreciate the synopses, which at points approach parody: "Habrocomes and Antheia [hero and heroine of "Ephesiaca," by Xenophon of Ephesus] are both sentenced to be crucified; Antheia's sentence is commuted to being shut up in a pit with two mastiffs, whereupon the guard, who has the usual interest in her, feeds the mastiffs so that she comes to no harm. The resemblance to the story of Daniel in the lion's den is clear, and so is a parallel with the story of Absalom in a following episode, where Antheia is captured by a band of robbers who have a custom of hanging a victim from a tree and throwing javelins at him (in this case her). Antheia is strung up for this ordeal, but is rescued by a law-and-order group. . . ." As befits a book composed for a live audience, Mr. Frye's language is often casual, and the reader may be in some doubt as to precisely how all the parts of his system fit together. Still, the lectures are instructive and, given the present interest in fables and romance, represent a timely contribution by a widely influential critic.

EDWARD KENNEDY AND THE CAM-
ELOT LEGACY, by James MacGregor Burns (Norton), and THE LAST KENNEDY, by Robert Sherrill (Dial). These books are diametrically opposed approaches to a man who is not running for President. Professor Burns's biography is meticulous and scholarly, and, while expressing some doubts about the man, it comes out more plus than minus. Mr. Sherrill's is a short, slam-bang attack, focussed on the Chappaquiddick incident and alleging a Kennedy-family coverup more devious than Watergate. One recognizes that both authors are talking about the same man, but Sherrill's ferocity makes the distinguished professor seem too tame and discreet, and Burns's sobriety makes the journalist seem too wild and personal. Neither uncovers a singular, or even very interesting, personality.

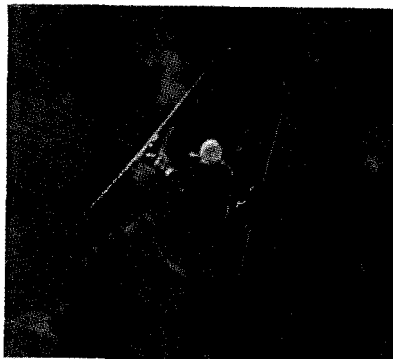
Kim McDonald of Old Saybrook played Beethoven's Fur (Umlaut Over The U) Elise—*Middletown (Conn.) Press*.

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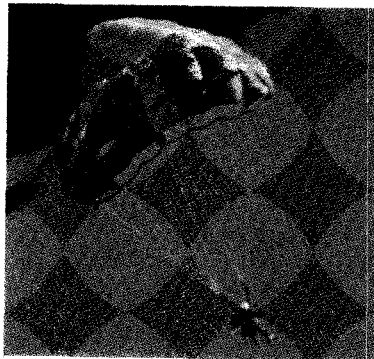


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